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ABSTRACT

The guidelines focus on procedures for determining eligibility for services of children with specific learning disabilities. A 13-step process is delineated from the classroom teacher's response to individual learner needs through multifactored evaluation team function to annual review and reevaluation. Throughout the process, special emphasis is given to differentiated referral procedures. Additional topics (with sample subtopics indicated in parentheses) include the following: individual learning differences; multifactored evaluation (required areas of assessment); eligibility criteria for success (exclusion criteria); characteristics of children needing services (medical indicators and qualitative test data); discrepancy score limitations; determination of eligibility and need for services (data interpretation, team report); development of the individualized education program (conference activities); and alternatives for ineligible, low achieving children. Appended materials include guidelines for facilitating learning and directions for using the Classroom Observation Procedure and Protocol. (CL)

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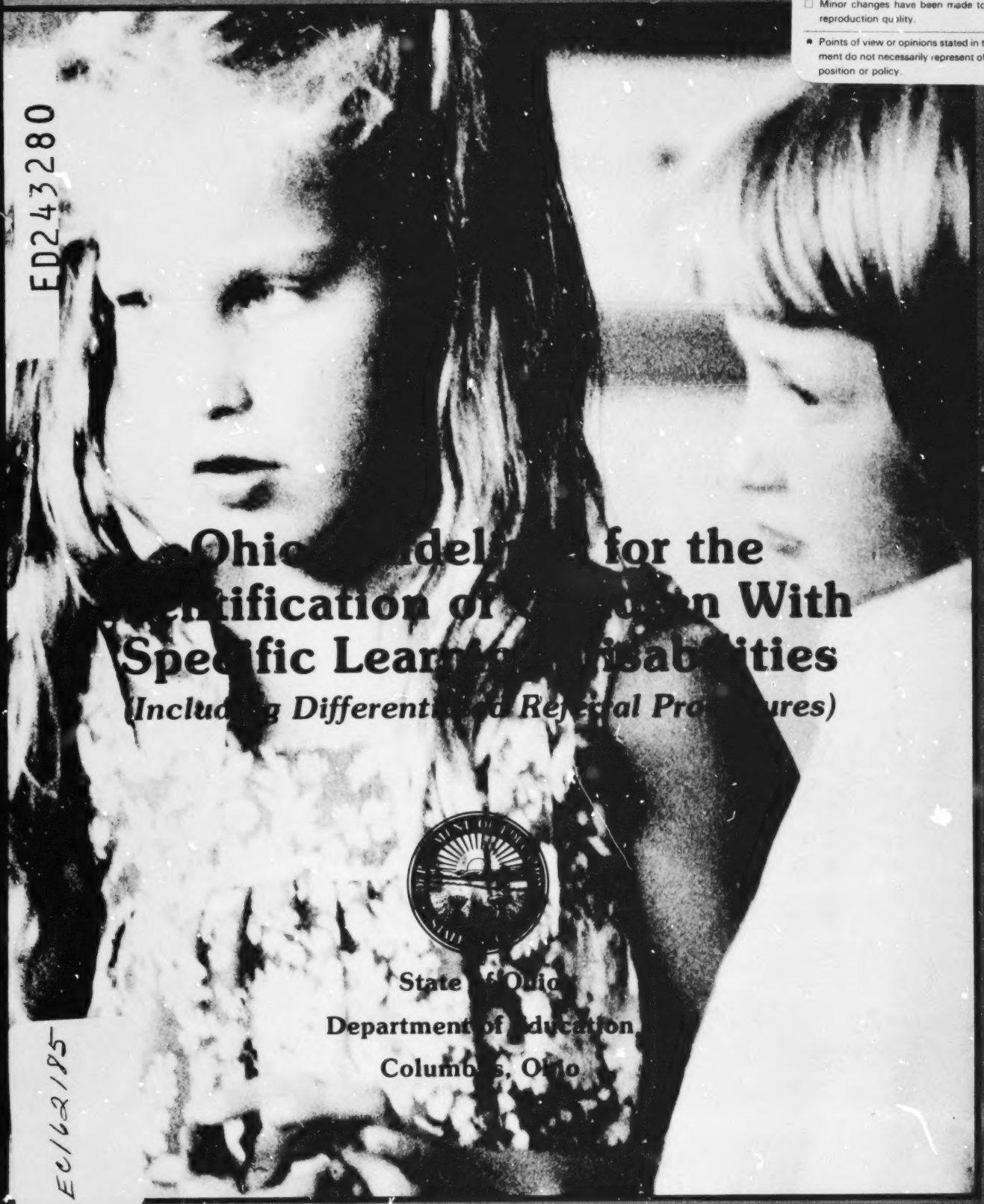

Ohio Model[illegible] for the [illegible]ification of [illegible]n With Specific Learn[illegible]isab[illegible]ities

(Including Differenti[illegible]d Referral Pro[illegible]ures)

State [illegible] Ohio
Department [illegible] Education
Columb[illegible], Ohio

EC162185

Ohio Guidelines for the Identification of Children With Specific Learning Disabilities

(Including Differentiated Referral Procedures)

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July, 1983

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This publication is unique because it represents the cooperative effort of a diverse population of individuals who have a common concern for the needs of children with specific learning disabilities. Without the concerted effort of parents and professionals of various disciplines, these Guidelines would not have reached fruition. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the many individuals who contributed to this effort, and add a special word of thanks to Edward Fox and Cathy Telzrow who co-chaired the Task Force, and to Michael Kabler and Karen Sanders who spent many hours reviewing the document in its draft stages.

The Guidelines contain a thirteen-step process designed to increase the efficiency of the identification and placement process. Included within these thirteen steps are activities which will support the regular classroom teacher in dealing with students who are experiencing difficulty prior to referral for multifactored evaluation (differentiated referral procedures), and with low achieving students determined by the evaluation team to be ineligible for special education programming.

Children in Ohio with specific learning disabilities will reap the benefits of this cooperative effort as these Guidelines are put into practice.

Frank E. New

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Preface

Development

This publication, *Ohio Guidelines for the Identification of Children With Specific Learning Disabilities (Including Differentiated Referral Procedures)*, hereinafter shortened to *Guidelines*, was developed by a statewide task force convened by the staff of the Cuyahoga Special Education Service Center in the spring of 1982. At that time multiple efforts to clarify identification procedures for children with specific learning disabilities (SLD) were in evidence among the Special Education Regional Resource Centers, professional organizations, and parent groups. Resources were developed randomly in response to requests from school personnel and parents for help in implementing the new Ohio *Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children*, effective July 1, 1982, hereinafter referred to as the *Rules*.

By common agreement, members of the statewide task force adopted an outline of essential components of such *Guidelines*. In two work sessions during the summer of 1982, they reviewed drafts compiled from excellent and extensive materials and data gathered through the individual and collective efforts of these agencies and organizations.

Revision

After editing, an intitial field test version of the *Guidelines* was distributed to selected parents and professionals representing diverse positions (e.g., principal, school psychologist, SLD supervisor, SLD teacher, speech pathologist, regular classroom teacher, special education director). These individuals submitted written comments and recommendations to the statewide task force on a structured feedback form provided with the initial field test version.

The comments from parents and professionals were compiled and reviewed during a meeting of the statewide task force in December, 1982. At this meeting, the task force concluded that the majority of comments endorsed the document. Therefore only minor editing would be conducted to reflect consistent recommendations from the reviewers. A reedited version of the *Guidelines* was discussed during a March, 1983 meeting of the statewide task force, where the decision was made to submit the *Guidelines* in an appropriate format to the Division of Special Education for Ohio Department of Education review by May, 1983, with the intent of achieving statewide publication and dissemination during the summer of 1983.

Review/ Dissemination

In June of 1983, the *Guidelines* were reviewed by the Ohio Department of Education and a grant was awarded to the Cuyahoga Special Education Service Center for printing and dissemination purposes. Dissemination will be accompanied by regional implementation seminars to be held during September of 1983.

July, 1983

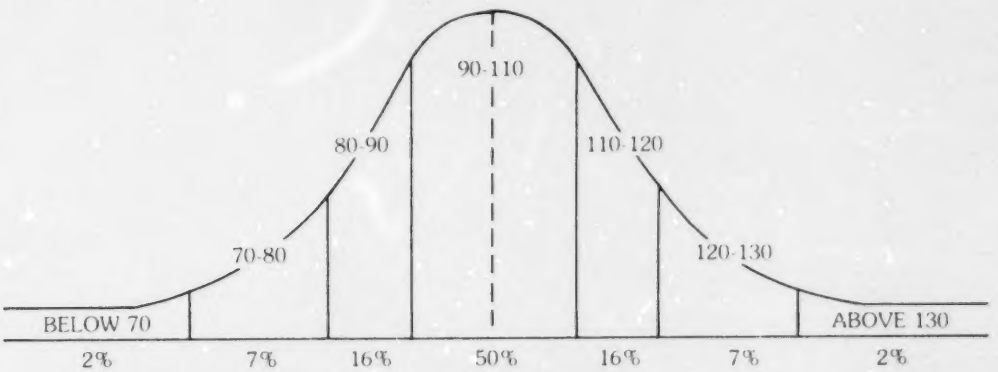
1. Introduction

This publication, *Ohio Guidelines for the Identification of Children With Specific Learning Disabilities (Including Differentiated Referral Procedures)* responds to requests from educational practitioners and parents for assistance in applying various federal, state and local regulations, rules, policies, and procedures to the determination of eligibility and need of individual children for specific learning disabilities programs and services in the public schools in Ohio. The specific purpose of the *Guidelines* and an overview of the process recommended follow.

Purpose of Guidelines

Ohio's *Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children*, effective July 1, 1982, include a discrepancy formula that can be used to determine the existence of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement. The *Rules* also emphasize, however, that judgment by members of the multifactored evaluation team that a specific learning disability exists is sufficient to qualify a youngster for SLD services even when the child's discrepancy score does not attain the level specified in the *Rules*. This publication provides practitioners with a set of guidelines to consider when identifying children with specific learning disabilities. The *Guidelines* are intended to increase the probability that children who are truly handicapped will be so identified and will be served appropriately.

The *Guidelines* were developed on the premise that SLD services provided in accordance with PL 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, and Ohio's *Rules* are designed for youngsters with **severe** discrepancies between intellectual ability and achievement. Educators must keep in mind that a wide range of achievement levels is to be expected within any given classroom, even when children are homogeneously grouped by ability level. The figure below illustrates the distribution of IQ scores that would be found in a classroom that was truly heterogeneous, i.e., representative of the entire population. In such a classroom, half the children would have IQ scores at or below average, and half would have IQ scores at or above average. Half the children would have IQ scores between 90 and 110, but approximately 41% would have below average scores in the range of 80 to 100.



Distribution of IQ Scores in a Heterogeneous Population

Theoretically, student achievement can be estimated from IQ scores, as illustrated on the next page. While many factors (e.g. motivation and attitude) may influence student achievement, IQ scores are the best single predictor of academic achievement. For example, in a randomly selected class of fifth graders who have IQ scores ranging between 85 and 115 (+ or − 1 standard deviation), achievement levels would be expected to range between the third and sixth grades.

These wide variabilities in achievement levels must be taken into consideration during the identification of children with suspected specific learning disabilities. While half the children in a given classroom may have achievement levels that are below grade level, most children are within the appropriate domain of regular education.

7

Potential Academic Achievement of Children with Various Intelligence Quotient Levels

Grade Placement	Usual Chronological Age	Below Average			Low Average			Average or Above		
		50	60	70	75	80	85	90	100	110
1.0	6.2	R*	R	R	R	R	R	R	1.0†	1.3+
2.0	7.2	R	R	R	R	1.0	1.3	1.5	2.0	2.4+
3.0	8.2	R	R	1.4	1.7	1.9	2.2	2.4	3.0	3.5+
4.0	9.2	R	1.5	2.2	2.5	2.7	3.1	3.4	4.0	4.6+
5.0	10.2	1.6	2.3	3.0	3.3	3.6	4.0	4.3	5.0	5.7+
6.0	11.2	2.3	3.0	3.8	4.2	4.5	4.9	5.2	6.0	6.7+
7.0	12.2	2.9	3.7	4.5	5.0	5.3	5.8	6.2	7.0	7.8+
8.0	13.2	3.6	4.5	5.4	5.8	6.2	6.7	7.1	8.0	8.9+
9.0	14.2	4.3	5.2	6.2	6.7	7.1	7.6	8.0	9.0	10.0+
10.0	15.2	4.9	5.9	7.0	7.5	7.9	8.5	9.0	10.0	11.0+
11.0	16.2	5.6	6.7	7.8	8.3	8.8	9.4	9.9	11.0	12.1+
12.0	17.2	6.3	7.4	8.6	9.2	9.7	10.3	10.8	12.0	13.2+

*Reading Readiness Level

†Values in the table are grade expectancy levels (GELs). These GELs were calculated using the Harris and Sipay (1980) formula for establishing reading expectancy level. The specific formula used was:

$$GEL = \frac{2MA + CA}{3} - 5.2$$

This formula gives priority to the influence of ability but also takes into account other age-related factors.

Students with specific learning disabilities, however, are those judged to have such severe discrepancies between intellectual ability and achievement that they are in need of special education. Thus, they are eligible for special education services under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. The benefits to such children since PL 94-142 became effective have been significant. In the future, the delivery of special education services for students who are handicapped because of specific learning disabilities will, hopefully, be improved even more by these *Guidelines*.

For additional information regarding the identification of specific learning disabilities, the reader needs to understand how the term is defined in the Ohio *Rules* and by Head Start.

The Ohio *Rules* define "specific learning disability" as follows:

> *. . . a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.*

A pertinent Head Start reference is as follows:

Head Start programs are mandated to serve handicapped children at a level equivalent to 10% of their population. School districts who receive transfer students from Head Start programs should be aware that these programs may utilize somewhat different criteria for the identification of specific learning disabilities. In addition to the basic definition as given in the

Ohio *Rules* (see Chapter 4), the Head Start definition includes the following statement:

> *For preschool children, precursor functions to understanding and using language, spoken or written, and computational or reasoning abilities are included.*

(Reference: "Transmittal Notice Announcement of Diagnostic Criteria for Reporting Handicapped Children in Head Start," OCD-HS, September 11, 1975.)

The reader is also referred to the State Superintendent's memorandum #81-34, "Implementing Ohio's Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children: Specific Learning Disabilities," on page 31 of the Appendix.

Other Applications

While these *Guidelines* were developed specifically for the purpose outlined above, much information herein can be used to improve services, first and foremost, to **all** children who may experience difficulties in the classroom (especially chapters 2, 10, and on pages 33-49 of the Appendix). Furthermore, aspects of Chapters 1, 3, 8, 9, and 10 are applicable to children with other than SLD handicapping conditions.

While the primary purpose of these *Guidelines* is to assist in the identification of children with specific learning disabilities, it must be recognized that there exists a population of children who have problems in school, although they may be judged not to be handicapped. Even though such children are not the responsibility of special education they nevertheless represent an important concern for all conscientious educators. Therefore, Chapter 10 comments briefly about students who, though referred for multifactored evaluation, are determined not to be eligible for or in need of a special education program.

Identification Process

Thirteen steps for determining eligibility and need for specific learning disabilities services are outlined on page 5. A chapter and page number for each step provides the reader with helpful cross references to this overview of the identification process.

Process for Identifying Children With Specific Learning Disabilities

Step	Activities/Resources/Procedures	References Chapter	Page
1	**Classroom Teacher Responds to Individual Learner Needs:** Regular classroom teachers use many sources of information which will assist in addressing individual learner needs within the classroom, including observations, school records, student work products, results from screening activities and parent referral.	2	6
2	**Classroom Teacher Requests Assistance to Meet Individual Learner Needs:** A differentiated referral process provides for assistance from individual support personnel, building principals, or building level teams of professionals. This process is designed to provide information and support to teachers in meeting the needs of individual students within the regular classroom.	2	8
3	**Multifactored Evaluation Team Receives Referral:** A multifactored evaluation (MFE) is requested only when other modifications within the regular classroom have not been successful. The MFE team consists of personnel as prescribed in the *Rules* and district policy.	2 3	9 10
4	**MFE Team Conducts Evaluation:** The MFE team conducts evaluation as prescribed in the *Rules* and considers data in light of the legal definition of SLD.	3 4	10 13
5	**MFE Team Examines Exclusionary Criteria:** The MFE team considers test data to determine if there is evidence the child does not qualify for SLD services because of a vision, hearing or motor handicap; mental retardation; emotional disturbance; lack of experience appropriate for age and ability; or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.	4	13
6	**MFE Team Considers Social and Educational Characteristics:** The MFE team examines evaluation data (e.g., observation findings, criterion-referenced assessment data, work samples) to determine if the child's behavioral characteristics are indicative of specific learning disabilities.	5	16
7	**MFE Team Considers Medical Data:** The MFE team examines the medical history of the child to determine if there are significant health factors which have been associated with specific learning disabilities.	5	18
8	**MFE Team Interprets Standardized Tests Qualitatively:** The qualitative information which can be obtained from standardized tests is used diagnostically by the MFE team to determine if there are indicators of specific learning disabilities.	5	18
9	**MFE Team Considers Special Characteristics in the Case of Young Children:** The unique factors which are relevant for very young children are considered by the MFE team for children below age eight.	5	19
10	**MFE Team Examines Discrepancy Score Calculations for Indicators of Measurement Artifacts and Errors:** When circumstances warrant, the MFE team may choose to put less emphasis on discrepancy score calculations because of apparent measurement artifacts. It is emphasized that sole use of the discrepancy formula to determine eligibility violates federal regulations.	6	21
11	**MFE Team Consolidates Information and Makes Determination Regarding Eligibility for SLD Services:** Using conclusions reached in steps 4-10, the MFE team reaches a decision regarding the existence of a specific learning disability.	7	23
12	**Appropriate Representatives and Parent(s) Develop IEP, Determine Placement and Services:** In accordance with procedures in the *Rules*, the IEP is cooperatively drawn up and an appropriate placement and related services, if any, are determined. For children judged not to be handicapped, the information collected by the MFE and IEP teams is transferred to the instructional assistance team for appropriate action.	8 10	25 28
13	**Appropriate Personnel Conduct Annual Review and Reevaluation:** In accordance with procedures prescribed in the *Rules* and other official publications, annual reviews and reevaluations are conducted for all children identified as specific learning disabled.	9	27

2. Individual Learning Differences

This chapter on individual learning differences provides a procedure for the identification of the educational needs of all children, including a determination of the extent to which those needs may be provided for within the regular classroom. In addition, this chapter describes a mechanism for the identification of children whose needs go beyond what can be provided in the regular classroom without special education or related services.

The following sections are arranged sequentially, beginning with those activities which are conducted by the regular classroom teacher for all children and moving to practices which are designed for children whose learning differences require additional resources.

Parent Referral

In some cases, the parent may be the first to suggest that a problem exists concerning the child's school achievement. Behaviors which occur at home and not in the classroom may alert the parent to the possibility of learning difficulties at school. These behaviors may include:

- The child does not want to attend or dislikes school
- The child becomes extremely disruptive at home
- The child frequently requests the parent to call or talk with the teacher about an academic or social problem

Regression in academic progress from one year to the next is sometimes noted by a parent before being recognized by the child's new teacher. Examples include lower achievement in reading, spelling, writing, or mathematics, especially if the child is well behaved in the classroom and elsewhere in the school environment. Once the parent alerts the teacher to the change, the information becomes a part of the educational diagnostic process. The building principal may also need to be involved in the monitoring of progress.

Teacher Diagnosis

The regular classroom teacher is usually the best source of information concerning the child's academic performance. With the exception of those who are enrolled in a special class/learning center, students are the primary responsibility of regular teachers. Individual learning differences may be identified very early in the school year from data which are readily accessible to or easily collected by the regular classroom teacher.

In undertaking the diagnostic role in the classroom, the teacher supplements the role of other diagnostic specialists. The classroom teacher may estimate levels of motor or perceptual skills, intellectual functioning, or social-emotional status, but this is not the teacher's primary responsibility. Instead, the function of classroom teachers is to render precise descriptions of behavior in their particular areas of expertise, i.e., in academic skills. Teachers should take responsibility for defining precise levels of skills in reading, mathematics, spelling, and writing, and for determining entry skill levels for instruction in basic subject matter areas within the classroom curriculum.

Rationale

Teacher diagnosis of learning differences is appropriate because the teacher is the person who:

- Is most familiar with classroom materials and with the demands to be placed on the child
- Has access to unlimited samples of the student's task behavior
- Sees the child during different times of the day and over many days
- Has an opportunity to collect observational data from independent seatwork, responses to group instruction, and trial teaching procedures
- Is a primary source of information in determining the child's educational needs

Data Sources

The teacher has access to incidental observation, school records, and work products. The use of these data sources is described below.

Incidental Observation. Two questions may help direct the teacher's observations early in the school year: (1) Which students demonstrate age-appropriate and grade level behaviors within the expected, normal range for this class? and (2) Which students exhibit unusual academic behaviors? Incidental observation should focus solely on academic behaviors of children, since the teacher is primarily responsible for assessing response to instruction.

Behaviors indicative of unusual learning differences include:

- Failure to complete a reasonable quantity of work within the time allotted for independent work
- Failure to follow directions, which results in work prepared inaccurately or at variance with oral or written directions
- Requesting frequent teacher aid (e.g., not beginning work following oral directions but waiting for the teacher to demonstrate the task)
- Reading orally with many word recognition errors or demonstrating poor reading comprehension skills
- Approaching tasks with exceptional slowness, purposelessness, or disorganization
- Failure to locate the place in the text, losing work papers, or having difficulty with group transitions
- Exhibiting tremors when holding a pencil
- Staring into space, engaging in repetitive motor activity, or exhibiting other competing activity during independent work periods
- Crying or having a tantrum when a task becomes frustrating
- Using language or speech typical of a younger child
- Requiring a number of trials to complete a task
- Consistently confusing signs of math operations

School Records. The school cumulative record card or record file may contain information which can be of assistance to the teacher. The possible ways the teacher can use the cumulative file include:

- Examine birthdate and present age
- Determine whether the child has been evaluated previously
- Determine if special education or related services were recommended previously
- Check student's achievement history for pattern of poor performance
- Check for history of retention in grade
- Examine student's attendance record
- Determine number of school transfers student has had and curricular issues related to school changes
- Compare standardized test data with classroom performance
- Examine anecdotal records from previous teachers
- Examine health records for relevant information (e.g., glasses prescribed but not worn, history of chronic otitis media)

Work Products. Certain aspects of a student's learning characteristics may become apparent following examination of daily work products. For example:

- Fine motor skills can be assessed through such tasks as copying letters and numerals, drawing figures for an art project, arranging materials for a science exhibit, or organizing puzzle parts
- Work sheets may reveal whether a student proceeded as directed or completed a page incorrectly as a result of not following directions. If, for example, an initial rather than final consonant sound was underlined, this pattern could be verified on other products to determine the extent to which the child is not attending to oral or written directions
- Work products which illustrate a sequential progression may include acceptable samples which preceded a drop-off in performance

Use of Teacher Diagnosis

The fundamental objective of classroom teacher diagnosis is to bring about a positive, effective learning environment for every child in the classroom. Information gathered by the classroom teacher from incidental observation, school records, and work products can be used to generate alternative teaching strategies for children whose learning characteristics do not appear to respond appropriately to the normal course of instructional events and materials. Often, simple modifications with individual children may help them overcome particular learning difficulties.

Even after significant efforts have been made to accommodate individual learning differences within the classroom, a given child's functioning in one or more areas still may not show satisfactory progress. In such instances, specific data from the incidental observation,

school records, work products, and the attempts to provide modifications to meet those differences provide the basis for initiation of the differentiated referral procedure.

Differentiated Referral Procedure

When a classroom teacher has undertaken all the activities suggested above and the child for whom there is concern still has not reached a satisfactory performance level or shown promise of reaching same, the teacher should consider making an appropriate referral. The following sequence of activities comprises a differentiated referral procedure, as provided for in the Ohio *Rules*. Such a procedure is designed to assist in the delivery of appropriate educational services to children in the regular classroom and to identify those children suspected of having handicaps and a need for a multifactored evaluation. At this time, the parent should be contacted and advised of the child's difficulties if such contact has not occurred earlier.

Requests for Assistance

A teacher who is concerned about a child's status may request assistance in modifying instructional programs or materials. The first level of request generally is made to another individual within the building. The following individuals should be considered:

- Assistant principal
- Curriculum consultant
- Department head
- Elementary or secondary supervisor
- Principal
- School counselor
- School psychologist
- Team leader

The reason for consulting one or more of these individuals is to secure recommendations regarding possible modifications to the instructional strategies or materials being used without appropriate success with the individual of concern. The teacher should be seeking modifications which, besides being responsive to the identified learning differences, are reasonable and feasible within the regular classroom. Unless school policies and procedures specify otherwise, such requests for assistance are usually informal and may take place through a personal conference arrangement.

Building-Level Team Assistance

More involved or difficult learning differences may lead a teacher to make a request for more formal assistance. Such asistance generally takes one of two forms:

- ***Ad Hoc Teams*** — those formed on demand and maintained as long as need requires
- ***Standing Teams*** — ongoing instructional assistance teams that meet at regularly scheduled times throughout the year

Members of Teams. While the composition of the team will vary according to the characteristics of each school district, personnel to be considered include:

- Building principal
- Child's teacher
- General education supervisor
- Librarian/media specialist
- Nurse
- Other regular classroom teachers (annual, semester, or rotating basis)
- Remedial reading and math teachers
- School counselor
- School psychologist
- Special education supervisor or teacher
- Speech & language pathologist
- Visiting teacher

One member should be designated as team leader. The principal is usually a wise choice because of this individual's critical leadership position and knowledge of potential resources.

Operation of Instructional Assistance Teams. Eight steps are considered appropriate for the operation of building-level instructional assistance teams:

1. Teacher diagnostic information is compiled and forwarded to the team leader by the classroom teacher, together with a request for assistance from the building-level team.

2. A meeting of the team is called by the leader (Ad Hoc Team) or convenes at regularly scheduled times (Standing Team). A printed agenda is recommended to facilitate the meeting.
3. Under the direction of the leader, the team identifies the child's current status, teacher efforts to date, and the child's apparent needs. A list of recommended modifications is generated. Common suggestions which may be of interest to members of building-level teams are listed on pages 33, 34 of the Appendix.
4. The team identifies one or more members to assist the classroom teacher with the implementation of the plan.
5. An appropriate implementation period is designed.
6. During the implementation period, the team leader or others, as agreed, will observe or consult with the teacher(s) responsible for implementation in order to assess the effectiveness of the plan.
7. At the conclusion of the implementation period, the child's progress is assessed by the team. If progress is evident, the team may recommend continuing the plan as implemented or with minor modifications.
8. If no change or unsatisfactory progress has occurred, the team may recommend alternative modifications or a multifactored evaluation. If the latter is recommended, the information collected to date may serve as the basis for the referral.

Referral for MFE

If the building-level instructional assistance team concludes that a multifactored evaluation is required to determine appropriate intervention for a child's learning differences, this decision must be regarded as an initital identification of a **suspected handicapped child.** At this point, all requirements outlined in PL 94-142 and the Ohio *Rules* regarding the identification, assessment, and placement of handicapped children must be implemented. The special education administrative policies and procedures of each school district address a variety of issues, including notification of parents, securing parental approval for evaluation, and informing parents of the evaluation procedures and due process rights.

Readers of these *Guidelines* must assure that the suggested procedures and resources are used in careful conformity with the administrative procedures for handicapped children that are in effect in the school district in which this activity is undertaken. The next chapter, "Multifactored Evaluation," provides only information which is primarily applicable to the evaluation of children with suspected specific learning disabilities. Even so, these suggestions always should be used in the context of the specific local administrative procedures for handicapped children.

3. Multifactored Evaluation

The multifactored evaluation (MFE) is designed to be conducted by a multidisciplinary team of professionals for the purpose of determining eligibility for special education services. The following sections provide a listing of team members, assessment responsibilities, types of evaluation data, and operating procedures.

Members of the Team

While the composition of the evaluation team will vary from district to district, the following personnel may be considered* as teams are formed:

- Adapted physical education teacher
- Audiologist
- Guidance counselor
- Occupational therapist
- Physical education teacher
- Physical therapist
- Physician
- Principal
- Reading specialist
- Regular classroom teacher*
- Regular education supervisor
- School nurse
- School psychologist/psychologist*
- Social worker
- Special education supervisor
- Special education teacher
- Speech & language pathologist
- Vision specialist

In addition, parents can contribute much essential information since they are most knowledgeable about the child's educational, social, and medical history. Their ideas should be solicited actively and incorporated as part of the written MFE.

Responsibilities for Team Members

Ohio *Rules* require that specific areas of a child's functioning be assessed in order to establish eligibility for special education services. Ohio *Rules* further require that:

- The evaluation be designed to ensure that children are not labeled as handicapped because of inappropriate selection, administration, or interpretation of evaluation materials
- Instruments used to assess the areas of functioning be administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication unless it is clearly not feasible to do so
- Tests and other instruments are validated for the specific purpose for which they are used
- Tests are administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by the producer
- Tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that when they are administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, their results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement or whatever other factors they purport to measure rather than the child's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, except where those skills are factors which the tests purport to measure

Types of Evaluation Data

The areas of functioning which must be assessed are outlined on page 11. This table comprises a listing of those individuals who are frequently available and may be qualified to provide the specific assessment data. School administrators are encouraged to identify which professionals within their districts are available, trained, and best qualified to contribute information about each required area of functioning. The MFE team is responsible for decisions regarding the appropriateness of an evaluation and the need for additional data.

Many types of evaluation data should be collected during a multifactored evaluation, for example:

- Scores on norm-referenced measures
- Performance on criterion-referenced measures
- Performance on other assessment tools (health-related evaluations, projective testing, etc.)
- Observational data regarding academic skills/behaviors demonstrated in the home
- Observational data regarding academic skills/behaviors demonstrated in the classroom
- Performance on developmental tasks
- Historical data (information from cumulative records, etc.)

*__Required personnel.__ Ohio *Rules* and the federal regulations for PL 94-142 require that a multifactored evaluation of any child suspected of being handicapped be conducted by a multidisciplinary group of qualified professionals. At a minimum, the child's regular teacher and a qualified school psychologist or psychologist must be members of the MFE team when a specific learning disability is suspected.

Required Areas of Assessment for Specific Learning Disabilities

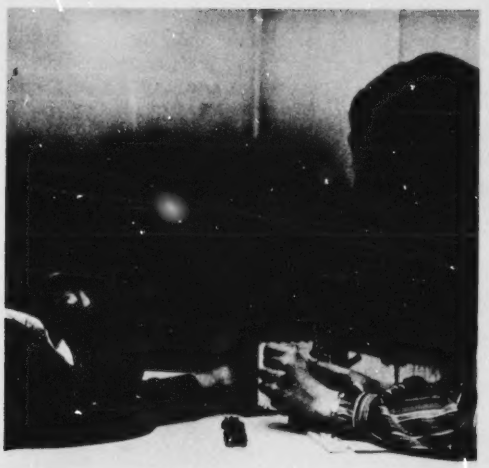
Evaluation Areas	Sources of Information*
• *General intelligence:* a measure of cognitive functioning that is designed for individual administration	— Parent — Psychologist/school psychologist — Regular classroom teacher
• *Basic reading skills:* word attack, sight vocabulary, structural analysis	— Psychologist/school psychologist — Reading specialist — Regular or special education teacher — Special education supervisor
• *Reading comprehension:* factual, inferential, application	— Psychologist/school psychologist — Reading specialist — Regular or special education teacher — Special education supervisor
• *Mathematics calculation:* computation, time, money, measurement	— Psychologist/school psychologist — Regular or special education teacher — Special education supervisor
• *Mathematics reasoning:* application	— Psychologist/school psychologist — Regular or special education teacher — Special education supervisor
• *Oral expression:* articulation, fluency, vocal quality, vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar	— Psychologist/school psychologist — Regular or special education teacher — Special education supervisor — Speech & language pathologist
• *Listening comprehension:* attending skills, perception, receptive knowledge of: vocabulary, basic concepts, structure, grammatical forms	— Audiologist — Psychologist/school psychologist — Regular or special education teacher — Special education supervisor — Speech & language pathologist
• *Written expression:* sentence structure, semantic accuracy, use of grammatic forms, spelling, composition skills, handwriting	— Psychologist/school psychologist — Regular or special education teacher — Special education supervisor — Speech & language pathologist
• *Vision abilities:* acuity, perception, eye coordination, physical eye condition	— Physician or school nurse — Vision specialist
• *Hearing abilities:* acuity, perception, physical ear condition	— Audiologist or hearing specialist — Physician or school nurse — Speech & language pathologist
• *Motor abilities:* fine and gross motor development and coordination	— Adapted or regular physical education teacher — Occupational or physical therapist — Physician or school nurse — Psychologist/school psychologist — Regular classroom teacher
• *Social & emotional status:* behavior, social interaction with peers and adults, general affect (see pages 14, 16)	— Guidance counselor — Parent — Psychologist/school psychologist — Regular classroom teacher
• *Observation* (see pages 16, 17)	— Psychologist/school psychologist — Special education supervisor — Special education teacher
• *Environmental, cultural, economic disadvantage* (see page 15)	— Guidance counselor — Parent — Principal — Regular classroom teacher — School nurse
• *Learning experiences appropriate for child's age and ability levels* (see page 14)	— Guidance counselor — Parent — Principal — Regular classroom teacher

*In each evaluation area there may be other persons equally qualified.

For more specific information about some of the assessment tools that might be used, see Telzrow & Williams (1982), one of numerous references listed in the Appendix on page 50.

Team Operation

Following completion of all appropriate evaluations, the MFE team uses the data to determine eligibility for special education services and completes the required MFE team report, which integrates all evaluation results. Additional information about multifactored evaluation can be found in the Ohio *Rules* and Kabler, Carlton, and Sherwood (1981).



4. Eligibility Criteria for Services

Multifactored evaluation team members must be knowledgeable about eligibility requirements as outlined in the Ohio *Rules*, including the exclusionary conditions specified. Discussions of both these topics are included in the subsections which follow.

Ohio Rules

In order for a child to be identified as handicapped, one of the definitions and its respective eligibility requirements, as outlined in the Ohio *Rules*, must be met. "Specific learning disability" is defined in the *Rules* as:

> *. . . a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.*

Pertinent sections of the Ohio *Rules* relating to determining eligibility for specific learning disabilities are reprinted in the Appendix on page 35. Although a specific section in the Ohio *Rules* requires the use of a formula for calculating a severe discrepancy score, the *Rules* do not authorize the use of a discrepancy score of two as the sole criterion for determining whether a specific learning disability exists. This rule deals solely with the determination of whether a severe discrepancy is present. When a discrepancy score of two or more is obtained by using the specific formula, a severe discrepancy exists. However, this score does not automatically qualify the child for SLD services. The MFE team must decide whether the severe discrepancy results from a specific learning disability or other factors. In other words, to determine that a child is eligible for SLD services, the MFE team must decide that:

- Achievement is not commensurate with ability levels in one of the required seven areas, even though the child has been provided learning experiences appropriate for age and ability levels
- The child's severe discrepancy is not primarily the result of vision, hearing or motor handicaps; mental retardation; emotional disturbance; or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage
- The child's severe discrepancy is the result of a specific learning disability and is not correctable without special education and related services

For additional information regarding the determination of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement through use of a discrepancy formula, see Telzrow and Williams (1982), listed as a reference on page 50.

Exclusionary Criteria

As specified in the *Rules*, certain conditions, when shown to be the cause of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement, exclude the child from a program for specific learning disabilities. The following discussion of these conditions may help MFE teams identify eligible children.

Vision, Hearing or Motor Handicap

These exclusionary criteria refer primarily to sensory or motor deficits which are so severe as to be more appropriately provided for in programs for the visually handicapped, hearing handicapped, or orthopedically handicapped. Other conditions which may accompany specific learning disabilities, such as auditory or visual processing disorders, or psychomotor problems associated with neurological soft signs, would not exclude an otherwise eligible child from SLD services.

Mental Retardation

Children whose learning difficulties are shown to be a result of mental retardation are ineligible for SLD services. Three major characteristics must be present for a diagnosis of mental retardation:

- Subnormal intellectual ability (i.e., IQ 80 or below)
- Deficits in academic achievement

- Deficits in at least two areas of adaptive behavior functioning

If all three of these characteristics are present, the MFE team may determine that a child is eligible for a special education program for developmentally handicapped children. If a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement is demonstrated, in the absence of adaptive behavior deficits or other indicators of mental retardation, such a child may be determined to be eligible for a special education program for specific learning disabilities.

Emotional Disturbance

Children with specific learning disabilities who have experienced school failure may have some characteristics of emotional disturbance. However, this becomes an exclusionary criterion for SLD services when such disturbance is the cause, rather than the result, of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement. A key distinction for the MFE team may be whether a child's inability to learn can be explained by a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, which would seem to suggest a specific learning disability, or whether it is due to a severe behavior handicap (SBH). Important factors in making this determination include:

- The specific expression of disorder
- The length of time the youngster has demonstrated the problem behavior(s)
- The degree to which these behaviors adversely affect educational performance

Ohio *Rules* define severe behavior handicapped as follows:

1. *The term means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance:*
   a. *An inability to learn, which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors;*
   b. *An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;*
   c. *Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;*
   d. *A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or,*
   e. *A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.*
2. *The term does not include children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they are severe behavior handicapped.*

The circular relationships between learning failure, resulting frustration, and the student's coping behaviors are a major complication in the differential diagnosis of SLD and SBH. Three factors can be used to help determine whether the behavior excludes the child from SLD eligibility:

- The onset of the behavior problem and the academic difficulties
- The duration of the behavior problem and academic difficulties
- The intensity of the behavior problem at onset and in its current state in relation to the intensity of the same behavior in other children of comparable age

When the topography, onset, duration, and intensity of the behavior disorder suggest that SBH may be the source of the child's academic difficulties rather than SLD, care must be taken to assure that all data requirements specified under "Program for SBH Children" are met. Additional information which must be considered includes:

- Physical examination by a licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy
- Background information regarding educational, family, and medical history
- Informal behavior observation by the child's current teacher and at least one other team member
- Behavior or personality measure

Learning Experiences Appropriate for Age and Ability

For a child to be eligible for the SLD program, it must be demonstrated that learning experiences appropriate for age and ability levels have been provided.

To decide whether this requirement has been met, the MFE team may determine that the

child's education has been disrupted. Possible indicators include extremely poor attendance, frequent moves which tend to interrupt the continuity of instruction, or unusual disruptions such as prolonged school closure due to adverse weather, financial circumstances, or employees' work stoppages. If the child's achievement is not commensurate with ability levels because of disruptions, the team may determine that the child is not eligible for SLD services.

The differentiated referral procedures described on pages 8, 9 may be helpful when making this determination. If the team has evidence that appropriate intervention strategies have been implemented prior to the referral for multifactored evaluation, members may use this information to conclude that appropriate learning experiences have been provided.

Environmental, Cultural, or Economic Disadvantage

Children of different environmental, cultural, or economic backgrounds may have a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement. However, these exclusionary criteria suggest that the source of the discrepancy may be due to one or more of these circumstances rather than the presence of a specific learning disability. Determination of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage requires careful judgment on the part of the MFE team members, who must evaluate the child's circumstances in relation to the sociocultural context of the school district.

Indicators of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage which might be considered by the MFE team include:

- Income at poverty level or below
- Recent immigration from another country
- Cultural values which are distinct from those of the majority culture
- Extreme disruption or disorganization in the family unit

A thorough and systematic evaluation of a particular student's environmental, cultural, and economic situation may be required. Types of information the team may consider include:

- Student's school and school district socioeconomic status
- School adjustment and performance of siblings
- Significant family events (family crisis, divorce, parental or sibling death, etc.)
- Reports from cooperating community service agencies working with the family
- Bilingual/bicultural background of family
- Influence of language and dialect on school performance

5. Characteristics of Children Needing Services

Specific learning disabilities are characterized by a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement. Documentation of a specific learning disability by members of the MFE team might entail consideration of a number of child traits. These include social and educational characteristics, medical indicators, qualitative performance on standardized tests, and characteristics of preschool and primary-aged children. These characteristics, as well as sources for related data, are described below.

Social and Educational Characteristics

Behavioral characteristics of specific learning disabled children have been shown to be important in differentiating between SLD and non-SLD populations. The kinds of behaviors which have been identified include both social and educational characteristics. Ten descriptors associated with specific learning disabilities (Clements, 1966; Tarver & Hallahan, 1976) are frequently cited:

- Hyperactivity
- Perceptual-motor impairments
- Emotional lability (ups and downs, moodiness, anxiety)
- General coordination deficits
- Disorders of attention (distractibility, perseveration)
- Impulsiveness
- Disorders of memory and thinking
- Specific academic problems
- Disorders of speech, hearing, and language
- Equivocal neurological signs

Information regarding these and other related characteristics of children with specific learning disabilities may be collected from norm-referenced tests, as well as through observation, teacher rating scales, criterion-referenced tests, and work samples, as discussed next.

Observation

The primary purposes of the observation requirement in Ohio *Rules* are:

- To provide additional and corroborative evidence that a pupil does have a learning disability
- To document the degree to which the pupil's disability, if any, affects classroom performance

Observation also can be employed as a means of confirming the classroom teacher's perceptions of a student's classroom behavior and performance and acquiring useful diagnostic information relative to how the student confronts and manages the demands and tasks of the regular school program. In order to fulfill these purposes, observations of the pupil in the regular classroom should be structured and must be conducted by someone, not the child's teacher, who is trained to use observation as a diagnostic procedure. Many of the following ideas about observation were reprinted with permission from *The Identification of Pupils With Learning Disabilities* (1981).

Direct observation occurs when an individual records behaviors emitted by, or elicited from, another person. There are two types of direct observation procedures: anecdotal observation and systematic observation. Anecdotal observations refer to the nonsystematic, periodic written descriptions of another person's behavior. Systematic observation procedures use either time sampling, interval recording, or continuous data recording.

Anecdotal Observation. In an anecdotal observation procedure, the observer is not required to record data at any particular time. This allows the observer to observe freely a total situation without the interference of recording behaviors. The observer evaluates, interprets, and describes the behavior of the person being observed in a general narrative format. In addition, since the observer is not required to record any specific type or category of behavior, it is possible to focus only on those behaviors judged to be meaningful.

While the strengths of this method include on-the-spot interpretation, evaluation, and general narrative description of the manifest behavior, these are also weaknesses. By not

first recording actual behavior, the observer introduces a major source of potential bias. Definitional inconsistence compounds the problem of inter- and intra-observer reliability. The information resulting from this method does not lend itself readily to quantification and systematic analysis. The great emphasis on analysis and interpretation of behavior would seem to preclude the use of paraprofessionals as observers. Finally, by not recording actual uninterpreted behavior, the observer cannot reevaluate the happenings or events that occurred in a given observation. Events are recorded only in terms of the observer's impressions or perceptions of what actually occurred. Critical information may be lost.

Systematic Observation. In systematic observation only actual behaviors (overt and some covert) are recorded. A purposeful attempt is made to eliminate evaluations, interpretations, and general descriptions of behavior, all of which are potential sources of bias in data collection. Most systematic observation systems identify and clearly define discrete categories of behavior to be observed. Consequently, the data collected are more readily comparable across observers (inter-observer) and across observations by the same observer (intra-observer). This allows one to quantify more readily the collected data and to make analytic and prescriptive statements based on relationships in the data. Most of these systems provide procedures and forms that facilitate and simplify the recording of behavior. Finally, by reducing the amount of subjective inferences and interpretations, a wide variety of persons, including paraprofessionals, can be trained to conduct the observation.

One limitation to systematic observation is the possibility of placing too much significance on isolated behavior. Data collected via this method should be summarized and analyzed systematically following the observation.

The use of a systematic observation procedure is recommended as a means to satisfy the observation requirement in Ohio *Rules*. Anecdotal observation procedures can also be used to obtain additional diagnostic information. The systematic observation procedure should include more than one structured in-class observation in order to provide additional validation for the observation results. The use of a control pupil allows the observer to interpret data in an appropriate context. The results of the systematic observation must be included in the MFE team's written report.

Resources for Observation. Several sources of additional information regarding direct observation procedures are cited on page 50 of the Appendix. The following may be particularly helpful: Alessi (1980), Keller (1980), Kratochwill (1981), and *The Identification of Pupils with Learning Disabilities*. A sample interval recording procedure and record form developed for use with suspected handicapped children (Classroom Observation Procedure and Protocol; COPP), along with directions for use, is also in the Appendix on pages 45-49.

Teacher Rating Scales

Teacher rating scales are frequently used to help identify the social and educational characteristics of children with suspected specific learning disabilities. Such scales are convenient because they require relatively little time for completion. They also permit teachers' observations to be organized in a systematic fashion. Limitations to teacher rating scales include:

- Restricted range of behaviors sampled, which may not reflect all relevant behaviors for an individual child
- Possible rater bias
- Tendency to focus on social-emotional rather than specific learning traits

To make the most valid and reliable use of teacher rating scales, MFE teams may wish to select instruments which have been designed for and standardized on a learning disabled population. In addition, requesting more than one teacher to complete a rating scale for a given child may permit MFE teams to validate teachers' observations. For further information regarding teacher rating scales, the following references are recommended: Hartlage (1973), McCulloch (1979), Richey & McKinney (1978), Sabatino & Miller (1980), Sattler (1982), Telzrow (1982), and Wilson (1980).

Criterion-Referenced Assessment

Important data regarding learner characteristics can be obtained from criterion-referenced assessment. Such information might help identify learning strengths and weaknesses as well as critical gaps in achievement areas. The MFE team may find the use of criterion-

referenced assessment especially valuable for the three communicative status areas (i.e., oral expression, written expression, and listening comprehension), for which normative-referenced tools may not be readily available.

Samples of Classroom Work

Samples of classroom work represent an important component of a multifactored evaluation. Since individual assessments often are conducted under optimum conditions (e.g., a one-to-one adult-to-child ratio, limited requirements for reading, or few time constraints), results of such assessments may lead to inflated estimates of a student's achievement. Work samples which are obtained during a routine classroom situation may assist in developing more realistic estimates of performance. Classroom work samples can provide data related to:

- Comprehension of directions
- Degree to which assignments are completed independently
- Mastery of processes (e.g., addition, capitalization, phonics usage)
- Ability to work under time constraints

Medical Indicators

Certain medical disorders and health history factors have been associated with specific learning disabilities. The list of conditions which follows, though not exhaustive, illustrates medical variables correlated with learning problems. The evaluation team must consider each case individually, since for a given child a positive medical history may be inconclusive or irrelevant.

Since numerous neurologic conditions may be associated with diverse disabilities, MFE teams must determine which of these represents the primary handicapping condition of relevance for special educational planning. The health history variables listed here should not be considered to command or preclude identification for SLD services. The application of an additive model, in which information about potential risk indicators is considered in conjunction with a full range of other factors, is recommended. Health history variables and neurologic conditions to be considered by the MFE team include:

- Premature birth or birth trauma
- Infectious processes, such as encephalitis or meningitis
- Head trauma or intracranial hemorrhaging
- Hydrocephalus with concomitant shunt dysfunction or spina bifida
- Seizure disorders
- Brain tumor
- Degenerative muscular diseases
- Metabolic disorders
- Genetic disorders

- Chronic otitis media
- Cerebral palsy
- Allergies
- Condition requiring specific medications (e.g., anti-convulsant)
- Vision problems

Qualitative Test Data

Standardardized test results may be interpreted qualitatively to provide additional information about children's learning abilities. The following kinds of qualitative data have been suggested by the professional literature, and may be used by multifactored evaluation teams to document a severe discrepancy in one or more areas of functioning.

Verbal Versus Non-verbal Functioning

Descrepancies between verbal and non-verbal functioning, such as may be apparent by comparing Wechsler Verbal IQ and Performance IQ scores, or measures of language and perceptual functioning, have been associated with specific learning disabilities. Since children without learning problems also have been shown to have such discrepancies (Kaufman, 1979), this characteristic should be considered within the entire context of the evaluation data.

Receptive Versus Expressive Functioning

Specific learning disabilities have been associated with weaknesses in either receptive or expressive information processing. Discrepancies between performance on measures of expressive language or non-language functioning and receptive measures of these processes may be interpreted qualitatively by the MFE team.

Visual Processing

Visual processing disorders, such as might be apparent from motor or non-motor measures of perception, may be indicative of specific learning disabilities. Results from such measures must be interpreted within the context of the student's age and level of intellectual ability, since both factors influence perceptual ability.

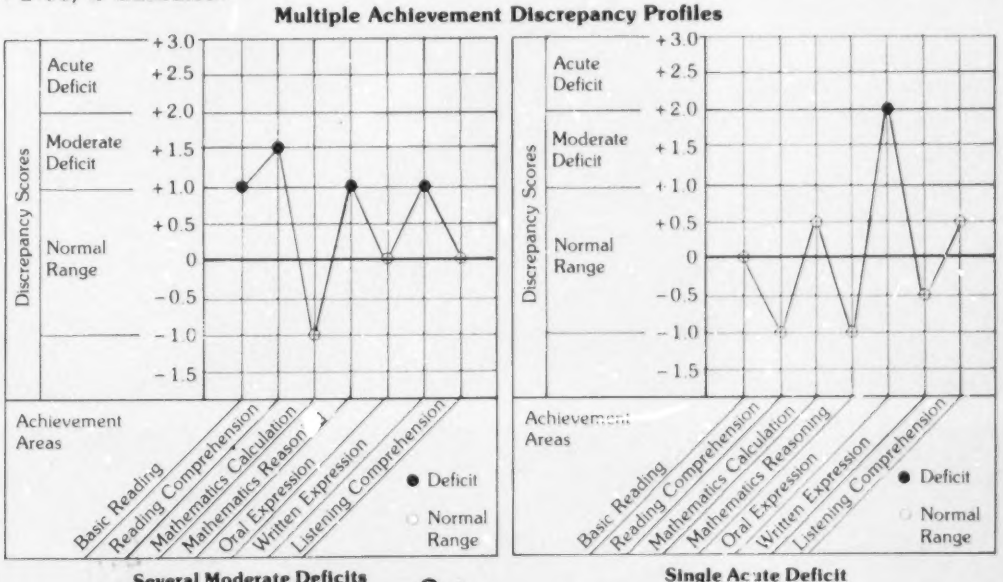
Auditory Processing

Auditory processing deficits, such as might appear on measures of auditory reception or discrimination, have been associated with specific learning disabilities. Since auditory processing is related to developmental age and cognitive ability levels, deficits should be interpreted in relation to such information.

Multiple Achievement Discrepancies

The multifactored evaluation team may determine that moderate deficits in several achievement areas are as significant as an acute deficit in one area. Qualitative evaluation of the number and size of deficits in the seven achievement areas is recommended. A method to assist in such interpretation is illustrated below. The left profile reveals several moderate deficits, which the MFE team members may interpret as a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement. At the right, a single acute deficit (discrepancy score +2.00) is illustrated.

Multiple Achievement Discrepancy Profiles



Several Moderate Deficits **Single Acute Deficit**

Characteristics of Young Children

Application of the discrepancy formula may be inappropriate for children under age eight due to limitations of current test instruments (especially with regard to the achievement measure requirement). For such populations, MFE team members may wish to rely on other sources for evidence of a severe discrepancy between achievement and ability.

General Sources of Data

Securing appropriate data for preschool children may require particular care on the part of MFE team members. Two types of data are particularly applicable to preschool children:

- ***Behavioral Data.*** This information may be obtained through observation or teacher checklist on social and educational characteristics. (See page 16-18.)
- ***Developmental Data.*** For very young children, team members should recognize that relatively small delays may be highly significant. (See pages 43, 44 in the Appendix.)

Precursor Functions

For preschool children, MFE team members should consider carefully those **precursor functions** noted in the Head Start definition of specific learning disabilities (see page 4), including all those learning readiness skills necessary for later achievement in academic areas. Examples of precursor functions include:

- Auditory and visual discrimination
- Gross and fine motor coordination
- Memory
- Expressive and receptive language

Prior Experiences

Also of importance, when considering very young children, is the extent of their previous or current participation in a preschool program, including: (1) developmental gains made while in the program, and (2) preschool teacher's information and : commendations. The kinds of learning opportunities and experiences young children have had at home may provide an additional source of information.

Young School-Aged Children

Although **classroom performance** and **work samples** should be taken into consideration for all suspected SLD children, more weight should be given to these variables when considering young school-aged children. Specific activities include:

- Direct observation of classroom behavior
- Comparison of child with other class members
- Observation of attention
- Observation of ability for independent work
- Observation of problem-solving strategies
- Recommendations for adjustments within regular classroom
- Observation of child's compensatory abilities
- Observation of discrepancies between child characteristics and curriculum requirements

6. Discrepancy Score Limitations

Information on the calculation and use of the discrepancy formula is available in Telzrow & Williams (1982). A'though calculation of a discrepancy score is an important step toward determining eligibility for specific learning disabilities services, members of MFE teams must be mindful that sole use of this criterion is unacceptable for a number of reasons. The following sections describe federal regulations against exclusive use of the discrepancy score, as well as potential measurement artifacts and errors.

Sole Use of Formula

Sole use of the discrepancy score criterion to identify specific learning disabilities violates federal regulations. Additional supportive data must be considered in the identification of SLD children. The types and sources of additional data which may be considered by MFE team members were outlined in the preceding chapter.

Measurement Artifacts and Errors

Specific limitations to the use of a discrepancy score criterion for the identification of children with specific learning disabilities may be of special interest to multifactored evaluation team members. In cases where there is evidence that the discrepancy scores lack adequate reliability or validity, team members may choose to emphasize other information in the MFE report.

Test Limitations

Several characteristics of standardized tests must be taken into account in evaluating the meaning of scores.

Insufficient "Floor" for Achievement Tests. Many achievement tests lack sufficient numbers of lower level items to assess accurately the performance levels of students with severe learning problems. To illustrate, raw scores of 0 on given achievement test subtests frequently derive scaled scores as high as 3 (mean = 10, SD = 3). School personnel should consider this limitation when selecting or using information from achievement tests. This limitation is especially likely to occur when assessing younger children, or those with very low levels of achievement.

Standard Scores Only to 65. For many standardized tests of achievement, scaled scores below 65 cannot be computed, making the calculation of a discrepancy score impossible for low functioning children. The use of raw score means and standard deviations, if available, may remedy this problem. Use of raw scores would allow for the calculation of a more accurate deviation score for the achievement test. In addition, the evaluation team may wish to use this information in qualitative assessment of a child.

Normative Populations. Norm-referenced measurement provides a means of comparing an individual's performance against a standard, defined by the normative population on which the test is standardized. Test users must evaluate the normative population to determine if it is representative, sufficiently large, and relevant for the individual in question (Sattler, 1982). In instances where tests are standardized on samples which do not include children of one sex or from certain cultures or socioeconomic levels, it may not be valid to assume that the derived scores are representative. In addition, tests which are standardized on small samples may possess unstable norms. Some of the most widely used instruments for assessing the seven areas of academic achievement may violate one or more of the assumptions about normative populations. Test users are urged to examine the technical manuals of test instruments in order to evaluate the standardization samples.

Test Reliability. Practitioners must evaluate tests on the basis of their reliability, in addition to their usefulness for assessing the seven areas of academic functioning. Many achievement tests commonly used by school personnel do not report reliability coefficients. Often those that are reported are sufficiently low to compromise the reliability of the derived test scores. Practitioners who wish may compute the reliability coefficients of the derived discrepancy scores through the use of the following formula:

$$\text{Reliability coefficient of derived discrepancy score} = \frac{\text{Average reliability of intelligence and achievement tests} - \text{Correlation between intelligence and achievement tests}}{1 - \text{Correlation between intelligence and achievement tests}}$$

If the reliability coefficients of the derived discrepancy scores are questionable, the MFE team may wish to place greater emphasis on factors other than the discrepancy score.

Regression Toward the Mean

Regression toward the mean describes a statistical phenomenon such that on any two test performances, where a linear relationship exists, if the first score is at either end of the distribution, the second score will regress, or fall closer to the mean. As a result of this phenomenon, children whose aptitude scores are below the mean may be less likely to obtain high positive discrepancy scores. When considering students whose intellectual ability scores are more than one standard deviation from the mean, the MFE team should consider the possible effect of regression when determining whether a severe discrepancy exists.

Sensitive Intellectual Measures

While the calculation of a discrepancy score is based on the premise that measures of cognitive functioning are not influenced by the deficits in academic functioning, pervasive learning disorders sometimes cause fluctuation in individual subtest scores and tend to depress the total scores on tests of intellectual ability. Students with neuropsychological disorders of verbal functions, for example, which produce severe reading, oral and written expression, and mathematics disorders, may have low verbal IQ scores. In such cases evaluation teams may wish to examine test performance from a qualitative perspective. (See page 18.)

Assessment of Young Children

The validity and reliability of measures of intellectual functioning for very young children are generally poorer than for school-aged populations. Since the derivation of a discrepancy score depends to a large degree on the reliability and validity of the obtained scores, a special caution needs to be raised in interpreting discrepancy scores for very young children. In these cases the more qualitative data, including behavioral characteristics, language samples, and number of problem areas identified, may be more significant.

7. Determination of Eligibility and Need for Services

The crux of the process described in these *Guidelines* comes when the MFE team makes the decision that a child is or is not eligible for a program for specific learning disabilities. Of special concern here is the decision-making process used by the team.

Evaluation Data

The identification of specific learning disabilities cannot be accomplished through the use of strictly quantified procedures. Instead, determination of eligibility and need for specific learning disabilities services require the application of careful clinical judgment by members of the MFE team. In making this determination, MFE team members must first consider all the data collected during the multifactored evaluation, including, as outlined on pages 13-15, **discrepancy scores,** as derived through the application of the discrepancy formula, and **specific exclusionary criteria** which may indicate ineligibility for SLD services. In addition to this information, MFE team members must consider other data, such as the following characteristics described on pages 16-20.

- Social and educational characteristics
- Medical indicators
- Qualitative performance on standardized tests
- Considerations related to preschool and primary-aged children

Another important consideration of the MFE team in determining eligibility is the discrepancy score limitations, including measurement artifacts and errors.

Interpretation of Data

Once the data have been collected and reviewed, MFE team members must interpret and evaluate these data to determine whether or not a severe discrepancy exists between intellectual ability and achievement, and whether this discrepancy is due to a specific learning disability. During the deliberation process, answers to these questions may assist in the interpretation of data:

- Are the onset and duration of the characteristics indicative of specific learning disabilities?
- Are the characteristics relevant to SLD identification?
- Do most of the data seem consistent with the SLD diagnosis?
- Are the characteristics severe enough to warrant SLD identification?

The following describe each of these decision points in greater detail.

Onset and Duration of Characteristics

The MFE team must evaluate the identified characteristics to determine when they were first noted and whether they have been present for some time. Since many other conditions may be mistaken for specific learning disabilities, careful attention to the onset and duration of the pertinent characteristics is essential. Characteristics which are indicative of specific learning disabilities would be expected to:

- Have begun in conjunction with the start of school or other specific academic demands, rather than in response to more general environmental stressors
- Have been present for a period of time regardless of general health or attempted interventions

Relevance of Characteristics

The MFE team must evaluate the data to determine whether observed characteristics are indicative of specific learning disabilities for the individual in question. In determining whether the identified characteristics are relevant to specific learning disabilities, MFE team members should consider both the number and the severity of these characteristics.

Consistency of Data

Demonstration of a small number of characteristics which have been associated with specific learning disabilities in some children does not necessarily signal the presence of specific learning disabilities. However, if a given child demonstrates a number of positive indicators, the MFE team members may feel more certain of the SLD identification. Using this procedure, the MFE team implements a cumulative or additive model to evaluate the redundancy of the data for a given individual. If diverse data sources produce evidence of specific learning disabilities, this would seem to be a clearer indicator of SLD eligibility than a small number of isolated characteristics.

Severity of Characteristics

The identification of children with specific learning disabilities under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act is reserved for children who demonstrate the most serious disorders. While many children may have individual learning needs which should be addressed via alternative educational strategies, most of these children can and should be served by education programs available to nonhandicapped children. Children with the most severe disorders are appropriately identified as specific learning disabled, and are thus eligible for services under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act.

Development of Team Report

As specified in the Ohio *Rules*, the MFE team must prepare a written report, certified by each MFE team member, which indicates whether or not the child has a specific learning disability and the basis for making this determination. Specific documentation of the data used in making this determination is a critical component of the MFE team report for children with suspected specific learning disabilities. For further information, see the Ohio *Rules*.

8. Development of the Individualized Education Program

Conference Participants

The individualized education program (IEP) is developed in a conference, as specified in the Ohio *Rules*. Conference participants shall include the following, one of whom is designated as chairperson:

- A person, other than the child's teacher, who is a representative of the school district and who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education
- The child's teacher
- One or both of the child's parents
- The child, where appropriate
- Other individuals at the discretion of the parent or agency

If a child is being considered for initial placement, a member of the MFE team (or a person who is knowledgeable about the evaluation procedures used with the child and the results of the evaluation) must participate in the conference.

Conducting the Conference

The purpose of the IEP conference is to:

- Review the report of the multifactored evaluation team
- Determine the nature and degree of special education intervention needed, if any
- Develop an IEP for a child who is judged to be in need of special education
- Identify the least restrictive environment for that child based on the continuum of program options

For children judged not eligible for or in need of special education, other educational alternatives may be explored, as discussed in Chapter 10.

The MFE team report is used to establish a child's present levels of educational performance on the IEP. This information forms the basis from which annual goals and short-term instructional objectives are formulated. An annual goal is defined by *Rules* as:

> *. . . expected behavior to be achieved through the implementation of the child's individualized education program. These goals must meet the unique needs of each handicapped child as determined by appropriate evaluation techniques or instrumentation.*

Goals are **broad targets** to be achieved within a year unless otherwise specified. The four components of goals are:

- Direction
- Deficit or excess
- Starting point
- Ending point
- Resources

A child with an identified deficit in basic reading skills may have the following goal:

- To increase (*Direction*) sight vocabulary (*Deficit*) from identification of PP words (*Starting Point*) to include primer and first grade level words (*Ending Point*) using a prescribed word-study method. (*Resource*)

Short-term instructional objectives contain the steps necessary for accomplishment of the annual goal. Each objective will have three elements:

- Behavior
- Criterion
- Condition

The child with deficits in sight vocabulary may have objectives such as:

- To read Dolch words from PP, P and 1 lists
  Behavior

  when flashed in isolation for two seconds
  Condition

  with 85% accuracy.
  Criterion

To read Dolch words from PP, P, and 1 lists
Behavior

in context without hesitation
Condition

with 85% accuracy.
Criterion

Daily lesson plans will reflect the activities to be carried out in order to attain short-term instructional objectives and, ultimately, annual goals.

Many resources which will assist in the development of IEPs are available through local school districts and the Special Education Regional Resource Center network. These include a number of references listed in the Appendix: *Children Summary Guide* (1978); Collins & Cunningham (1976); *Developing and Implementing Individualized Education Programs* (1978); Fairchild (1976); *Individual Education Planning* (1979); *Individualized Education Program* (1979); Stephens, Hartman & Lucas (1978); *Working Together to Develop the IEP* (1981); and *Writing Long-Term and Short-Term Objectives (1977). When using information from other sources, developers should ensure that the information complies with current Ohio Rules.*

9. Annual Review and Reevaluation

Procedures for conducting annual reviews and reevaluations are described in Ohio *Rules*. The following comments and suggestions pertaining to annual review and reevaluation are of relevance to children with specific learning disabilities.

Requirements

The *Rules* require that at least one IEP conference be conducted each calendar year to review and revise, if appropriate, the child's IEP. The participants and purposes of this conference are the same as those described on page 25. Prior to the IEP meeting, the progress made in achieving annual goals and objectives must be determined. While application of the discrepancy formula is not required at this time, the conference participants must document that the child continues to be eligible for SLD services. Sources of documentation may include those previously identified in Chapters 4 and 5.

Using the methods described in these *Guidelines*, the IEP team should exercise the same care in determining continued need for special education intervention as was exercised in determining initial need. Because a child may show a broad achievement gain and lowered discrepancy as a result of SLD placement, the team will need to examine the extent to which achievement levels will be maintained if special education services are terminated.

Reevaluations are required every three years, or more frequently if conditions warrant or if the child's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation. The *Rules* require that all activities specified for initial evaluation be implemented, including observation of the child's academic performance in a regular classroom setting. Reevaluation results form the basis for the present levels of education performance specified on the IEP.

Program Continuum

During the annual review, or following reevaluation, members of the IEP team may wish to refer to the continuum of special education program alternatives described in the Ohio *Rules*. Revising the IEP to reflect a less restrictive special education setting (e.g., transferring from a special class/learning center to individual/small group instruction) may represent an interim step for a learning disabled child for whom eventual regular class placement is planned.

Regular Classroom Integration

Persons who participate in annual reviews and reevaluations may wish to consider the child's behavioral, as well as academic preparation for return to a regular classroom. Some children may demonstrate sufficient academic progress to warrant placement in the regular classroom, although they may not possess the requisite behaviors necessary for regular class integration. This circumstance may be especially true for students who have spent the major part of the school day in a special class/learning center.

Team members can be particularly helpful in determining whether a given student is prepared to return to the regular classroom by identifying differences between regular and special class behavioral expectations. Team members may then help the child make the transition from special to regular class settings by recommending strategies for modifying the student's behavior to conform to regular class expectations or for altering the learning environment. Team members can also be helpful in sensitizing teachers and students to the individual learner's needs.

10. Alternatives for Ineligible, Low Achieving Children

The purpose of these *Guidelines* is to assist practitioners in identifying children with specific learning disabilities, but the members of the statewide task force are also concerned about ineligible, low achieving children. Some suspected handicapped children who have been referred for multifactored evaluation may not be eligible for or in need of a **special education** program, but such children still need additional help. This section suggests strategies for school personnel to use in providing follow-through services to concerned teachers and to low achieving children.

Communicating Results

When a referred child has been evaluated and the IEP team determines that a special education program is not needed, the information gathered as a result of the multifactored evaluation should be communicated to the building-level instructional assistance team described on pages 8, 9.

Communications may occur in any or all of the following ways:

- Written MFE team report
- Written reports of individual team members (e.g., school psychologist's or speech therapist's reports)
- Oral presentation/discussion of MFE results
- Summary (written or oral) of IEP meetings

Reviewing Problems

Once the instructional assistance team has received information regarding the outcome of the multifactored evaluation and the IEP team meeting, the members may wish to determine whether the child is continuing to exhibit educational problems. Generally, children referred for multifactored evaluations and subsequently determined not to be eligible for special education continue to demonstrate problems in school.

Such problems can often be resolved. Solutions might include modified teaching strategies or more realistic expectations in the regular classroom, additional support at home, or changed factors affecting the learning environment of the child. The regular classroom teacher who initiated the original referral for multifactored evaluation and the parent(s) are sources for the instructional assistance team to consult when making a determination about whether educational concerns continue to be present.

If the instructional assistance team determines that a child who is ineligible for special education placement continues to exhibit school difficulties, alternatives to special education placement might be pursued. Options to consider include:

- Referral to remedial programs
- Change of classroom assignment
- Modifications such as those described in the Appendix on page(s) 33, 34
- Alternative educational plan such as that described by Cummings & Nelson (1982)

Some alternatives may have been explored or implemented as part of the instructional assistance team's recommendations prior to referral for multifactored evaluation. However, the additional data collected during the course of this evaluation may assist the instructional assistance team in developing viable alternatives to special education.

Monitoring Alternatives

Instructional assistance teams are urged to examine the characteristics of children who are not eligible for special education programs and to collect data about successful alternatives to special education. Such alternatives might be used in subsequent cases for other children whose educational problems are similar.

Many youngsters who are not eligible for special education, although they nevertheless exhibit learning difficulties, share a similar pattern of characteristics, such as below-average intelligence, a significant lag in academic skills, and mild perceptual or motor delays. Many ineligible, low achieving children, as emphasized in Chapter 1, are often working up to their capacity. However, teachers may have a tendency to refer such children for multifactored evaluation repeatedly unless they are apprised of previous findings and given assistance in making appropriate modifications.

11. Summary

Field-Tested Concepts and Procedures

These *Ohio Guidelines for the Identification of Children With Specific Learning Disabilities* have incorporated recommendations from many persons throughout the state. All the concepts and procedures have been field-tested in a wide variety of settings. Special emphasis has been given to the **differentiated referral procedures** with the expectation that all students with learning problems, regardless of their nature or intensity, may benefit from a systematic pooling of expertise that is available in most school settings.

Thirteen important steps in the process of complete and appropriate identification and placement of eligible students with specific learning disabilities have been described in these *Guidelines*. In addition, attention has been given to further appropriate actions that may be undertaken in school for suspected handicapped students who are referred but are not found to be eligible for or in need of special education *per se*. The compilers of these *Guidelines* are convinced, however, that many such students, although not appropriately served in special education (and specifically in SLD programs), nevertheless may need additional and special attention which a regular classroom teacher can't always provide. School districts have reported considerable success in facilitating the provision of extra assistance and appropriate additional resources to regular classrooms through building-level instructional assistance teams.

Enhancement of Educational Services

Full implementation of these *Guidelines* by school personnel can improve educational services to both handicapped and non-handicapped children. In summary, the several mechanisms listed below and described in detail in the *Guidelines* can lead to enhancement of both special and regular education:

- An effective differentiated referral system to screen for children who require multifactored evaluation
- A building-level support structure to assist teachers and non-handicapped children when problems arise
- A list of characteristics, supported by the literature, which may assist MFE teams in the identification of SLD children
- A clarification of the exclusionary criteria outlined in the Ohio *Rules* for SLD
- A deliberation procedure to be used by MFE teams when considering the data relevant to the determination of SLD eligibility
- A description of alternatives to special education for ineligible, low achieving children

Persons who use these *Guidelines* are invited to share their experiences, questions, comments and suggestions with personnel in their Ohio Special Education Regional Resource Center (SERRC) and the Ohio Department of Education, Division of Special Education. Contributors to this document are hopeful that it will encourage teachers, support personnel, administrators, and parents to continue their creative dialogue on the improvement of educational opportunities for all children and youth in school systems throughout Ohio.

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STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COLUMBUS
43215

FRANKLIN B. WALTER
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

#81-34

December 11, 1981

TO: City, County, Exempted Village, Local, JVS and Nonpublic Superintendents

FROM: Franklin B. Walter, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Implementing Ohio's Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children: Specific Learning Disabilities

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I. Historical Background

The category of specific learning disabilities was a major concern in the deliberation of Public Law 94-142. Congress restricted this population to one-sixth or two percent of the child count until rules defining specific learning disabilities could be developed.

In December of 1977, the U. S. Office of Education issued rules governing the procedures for Evaluating Specific Learning Disabilities. These rules require that a multidisciplinary team evaluate and justify a determination that a child has a specific learning disability by:

(A) Determining the existence of a severe discrepancy between the child's measured ability and the child's measured achievement, in one or more of seven areas.

(B) Determining that this severe discrepancy is not primarily the result of: vision, hearing or motor handicap; mental retardation, emotional disturbance; or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

(C) Preparing a written team report outlining the basis for making its determination and certifying, in writing, whether the report reflects each member's conclusions.

A specific procedure for determing the existence of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement had not been specified at either the federal or state level. Methods for making this determination have varied widely in public school districts in Ohio. In an attempt to remedy the inconsistencies among school districts, a formula to arrive at a discrepancy score is contained in Ohio Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children. This discrepancy formula will assist school districts in making the determination of the severity of discrepancy and will facilitate the justification process as contained in the Federal Regulations.

II. Issues Requiring Consideration

As school districts begin implementing the Ohio Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children, the following issues concerning Programs for Specific Learning Disabled Children need to be given serious consideration:

(A) The determination of a specific learning disability based solely on the discrepancy score would be in violation of Federal Regulations. The Ohio Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children do not require a discrepancy score of two or greater for specific learning disabilities placement or mandate placement because a severe discrepancy is demonstrated. Eligibility for a Specific Learning Disability Program is determined by the evaluation team, based on several factors, including the presence of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement. If the application of the formula does not demonstrate a discrepancy score of two or above, the evaluation team may determine that a child has a specific learning disability and document evidence to justify this decision. (34 CFR 300-532 (3)(d) and 300-543).

(B) The application of the severe discrepancy formula as a part of the evaluation process is required only at initial evaluation and the required reevaluation. This reevaluation must be conducted every three years or more frequently if conditions warrant or if the child's parent or teacher requests an evaluation. (34 CFR 300-534).

(C) The application of the severe discrepancy formula for children currently placed in specific learning disabilities programs must be carefully considered. While a growth in achievement will lessen the measured discrepancy, a need for continued placement may be indicated. Consideration by the evaluation team must be given to this effect when determining continued eligibility for placement in a program for children with specific learning disabilities.

(D) The application of the severe discrepancy formula for children below 8 years of age requires careful consideration because of the validity and reliability of tests currently available to measure achievement in the seven areas listed in the regulations. (34 CFR 300-532).

Guidelines for Facilitating Learning

(Things That We All Know But Sometimes Forget)

General Guidelines

1. Communicate genuine caring, maintain a supportive and non-threatening emotional atmosphere, nourish the child's ego.
2. Use graphs to monitor academic and social behaviors, and share these with the child.
3. Be consistent so that the child knows what responses to expect.
4. Alternate periods of concentration with periods of movement.
5. Structure the learning situation as concretely as possible. Post a schedule and announce any changes in the routine.
6. Give children jobs that make them feel important.
7. Apply the theory of "overlearn" to establish patterns of procedure and reliable response.
8. Develop strategies to meet each child's learning style.
9. Make sure materials are appropriate to each child's physical, perceptual, and academic abilities.
10. Teach to the child's strengths while developing deficit areas.
11. Commit yourself to the best use of the time you have with a child.
12. Seat the child away from disruptive students and away from doorways and windows, if auditory and visual stimuli cause distractions.
13. Require completion of assigned work before permitting opportunities for recreation. Establish an acceptable level of performance beforehand.
14. Provide the student with a peer helper who can help by:
    - Making certain directions for assignments are understood
    - Reading important directions and essential material
    - Drilling the student orally on necessary information, e.g., multiplication tables, state capitals, parts of speech
    - Summarizing important textbook passages orally
    - Writing down answers to tests and assignments
    - Working with the student in a joint assignment
    - Constructively criticizing the student's work and making suggestions for improvement
15. Provide parent with information materials to be used at home to reinforce efforts at school. These materials might include the following:
    - Practice exercises for vocabulary, concepts, and math operations given in class
    - Discussion questions for reading stories, social studies, and science units
    - Project directions/guidelines for application of academic instruction
    - Alternative forms of homework such as tape recordings, oral report outlines, typed work rather than written
    - Options for computer use at home for practice
16. Limit assignments to the amount of work that can be completed correctly.
17. Find out if the student is a visual or auditory learner and teach to that strength. For example, if a student is having difficulty with phonics, use the sight word method.
18. Use interest inventories to help choose materials.
19. Provide immediate feedback on assignments.
20. Include in assignments only that material which is necessary to learn.
21. Hold conferences with students to review their responsibilities and to assess their progress.
22. Seat the child close to the teacher when immediate help is needed. Another student can be named as helper and be seated close to the child.
23. Create a small work group of three or four students. Hold all members of the group responsible for making certain that each group member completes assignments successfully.
24. If the child expresses an opinion in an argumentative manner, set up a debate situation where the child has to assume the opposite point of view.
25. Model the use of reference material when precise information is needed.
26. Be aware of the variety of skills needed to complete one task, simplify the task if complicated.
27. Set short term goals; keep progress chart; review progress on a consistent, systematic basis.
28. Provide lots of practice in following written and oral direction.
29. Have students make and refer to multiplication tables when working examples.
30. When giving directions for a worksheet, be sure child has the paper to follow while listening.
31. Encourage child to ask questions in order to help clarify confusing concepts or to obtain the needed repetition.
32. Give students several alternatives in both obtaining and reporting information, e.g., tapes, interviews, reading, experience, and making projects.

Behavior Guidelines

1. Establish positive expectations, spell out appropriate behavior in each situation.
2. Set understandable limits and logical consequences for behavior.
3. Give children the opportunity to test out situations until they learn to handle them. Permit children to choose the consequences that will result from misbehavior.

4. Resist reviewing past transgressions, start off fresh each time and deal with the present.
5. Ignore a restless behavior if it is non-disruptive and of short duration.
6. Anticipate a child's frustration level and intervene before the point of explosion.
7. Find something to praise about each student. Praise little steps toward ultimate goals.
8. Use study carrels to lessen distractions. They may be called "offices" and should not be used for punishment. A corner of the room or the hall just outside the classroom also may be used.
9. Move around the room while teaching to help quiet those who create disturbances.

Visual Guidelines

1. Use visual or tactile cuing to gain the child's attention.
2. If the child is primarily a visual learner, adjust mode of presentation by:
   - Having students use flash cards printed in bold bright colors
   - Having students close their eyes and try to visualize words of information in their heads, see things in their minds
   - Providing visual clues on chalkboard for all verbal directions
   - Having students write notes and memos to themselves concerning important words, concepts, ideas
3. Make assignments visually uncomplicated: use reproduced materials (copies) that are easy to read, limit the number of items on a page, and allow only one set of directions per page.
4. Make greater use of visual aids.
5. Use cut-out letters and numbers to spell or do math operations.
6. Create arrays with markers to illustrate the concept of multiplication.

Auditory Guidelines

1. Emphasize verbal instruction and verbal participation in social studies and science.
2. If the child is primarily an auditory learner, adjust mode of presentation by:
   - Giving verbal as well as written directions
   - Taping important reading materials for students to listen to as they read a passage
   - Putting assignment directions on tape so that students can replay them when needed
   - Giving students oral rather than written tests read by the teacher or another student
   - Having students drill on essential information by taping the lessons, playing them back, and listening
   - Using published audio tapes with students
   - Having students drill aloud to themselves or to another student
   - Dictating information to student recorder or into a tape recorder
   - Having another student read important information to LD students
   - Having students read important information aloud to themselves or to another student
   - Having students re-auditorize silently, vocalizing materials to themselves
   - Having students repeat words silently or write them down on paper to keep from leaving out words or phrases
   - Having students close their eyes and try to hear words or information, repeating the content to themselves in order to block out distractions
3. Have student repeat directions and explain what is expected.
4. Use listening centers or tape recorders for practice drills.
5. Alternate auditory and non-auditory activities in order to avoid fatigue and frustration.
6. Obtain the attention of the auditorily deficient child before beginning oral instructions. Have frequent eye contact.

Language Arts Guidelines

1. Help the student build a sight word vocabulary by putting no more than five unknown sight words on oak tag cards and by placing them on a shower ring that the student carries at all times. When a word card is mastered, it is put in a box in the student's desk and becomes part of a "treasure box of words." A new word then is added to the shower ring to be learned. Treasure box words may be used when the child writes sentences or creative stories.
2. Use guided reading. Read a shortened sample for a single purpose.
3. Teach spelling by words patterns and assign fewer words.
4. Use the language experience approach to integrate what children often view as isolated assignments or concepts.
5. Use simple sentences or one-concept phrases with the child.

Mathematics Guidelines

1. Assign pages containing problems that use a single operation per page. Mixing addition, subtraction, and multiplication may be too confusing.
2. Draw a child's attention to signs by outlining them in red ink.
3. Use graph paper for calculations of more than one digit.

Eligibility for Specific Learning Disabilities

(Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children, 3301-51-04 G)

G. PROGRAM FOR SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABLED CHILDREN

1. Eligibility

A child who meets the definition for specific learning disability according to paragraph FFF. of rule 3301-51-01 of the Administrative Code and the following requirements shall be eligible for special education programming and related services for specific learning disabled children.

a. Each child shall have a multifactored evaluation for initial placement that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, evaluations in the following areas:

(i) General intelligence as determined through a measure of cognitive functioning administered by a qualified psychologist using a test designed for individual administration;

(ii) Academic performance as measured through the use of standardized tests designed for individual administration which must include evaluation in the areas of:

(a) Basic reading skills,

(b) Reading comprehension,

(c) Mathematics calculation, and

(d) Mathematics reasoning;

(iii) Vision, hearing, and motor abilities;

(iv) Communicative status, which must include assessments in the areas of:

(a) Oral expression,

(b) Listening comprehension, and

(c) Written expression; and

(v) Social and emotional status.

b. Each child shall have a severe discrepancy between achievement and ability which adversely affects his or her educational performance to such a degree that special education and related services are required. The basis for making the determination shall be:

(i) Evidence of a discrepancy score of two or greater than two between intellectual ability and achievement in one or more of the following seven areas:

(a) Oral expression,

(b) Listening comprehension,

(c) Written expression,

(d) Basic reading skills,

(e) Reading comprehension,

(f) Mathematics calculation, or

(g) Mathematics reasoning.

(ii) The following formula shall be used in computing the discrepancy score:

(a) From:

(i) The score obtained for the measure of intellectual ability,

(ii) Minus the mean of the measure of intellectual ability,

(iii) Divided by the standard deviation of the measure of intellectual ability;

(b) Subtract:

(i) Score obtained for the measure of achievement,

(ii) Minus the mean of the measure of achievement,

(iii) Divided by the standard deviation of the measure of achievement.

(c) The result of this computation equals the discrepancy score. If the discrepancy score is two or greater than two, a severe discrepancy exists.

(iii) Achievement is not commensurate with his or her age and ability levels in one or more of the seven areas listed in paragraph G. 1. b. (i) of this rule when there is evidence that the child has been provided learning experiences appropriate for his or her age and ability levels.

(iv) The child's severe discrepancy between achievement and ability is not primarily the result of:

(a) Vision, hearing, or motor handicap;

(b) Mental retardation;

(c) Emotional disturbance; or

(d) Environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

c. The academic performance in the regular classroom setting shall be observed by at least one evaluation team member other than the child's regular teacher. In the case of a child of less than school age or one who is out of school, a team member shall observe the child in an environment appropriate for a child of that age.

d. A written report shall be developed by the evaluation team for each child evaluated for a specific learning disability. Each evaluation team member shall certify in writing whether the report reflects his or her conclusion. If it does not reflect his or her conclusion, the team member must submit a separate statement presenting his or her conclusion. The report must include a statement of:

(i) Whether or not the child has a specific learning disability;

(ii) The basis for making the determination;

(iii) The relevant behavior noted during the observation of the child;

(iv) The relationship of that behavior to the child's academic functioning;

(v) The educationally relevant medical findings, if any;

(vi) Whether or not there is a severe discrepancy between achievement and ability which is not correctable without special education and related services; and

(vii) The determination of the team concerning the effects of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

e. In the event that the evaluation team determines that a child has a specific learning disability, even though the application of the formula for computing the discrepancy score indicates that the child does not have a discrepancy score of two or greater than two between achievement and ability, the team judgment must prevail. In this event, the team must document in the written report the following additional information:

(i) Data obtained in the evaluation of the seven areas of educational functioning listed in paragraph G. 1. b. (i) of this rule;

(ii) Recommendations and information obtained from the child's regular classroom teachers and parent;

(iii) Evidence of the child's performance in the regular classroom including work samples and group test scores;

(iv) Evidence of possible deficiencies in more than one of the seven areas of educational functioning;

(v) Additional supportive data besides standardized test data; and

(vi) Consideration of the child's age, particularly in the case of young children.

f. Medical consultation shall be encouraged especially when school authorities feel that there has been a change in the child's behavior or educational functioning or when new symptoms are detected.

g. The required reevaluation includes, but is not necessarily limited to, areas in paragraphs G. 1. a. to G. 1. e. of this rule.

Primary/Intermediate Teacher Checklist of Suspected SLD Student Characteristics

Student: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Subject/Grade: _____

	Most of the time	Some of the time	Seldom	Never	Not observed
1. Finishes things begun					
2. Listens attentively					
3. Concentrates on schoolwork					
4. Thinks before acting					
5. Completes one activity before moving to another					
6. Organizes work appropriately					
7. Needs little supervision					
8. Waits turn in games or group situations					
9. Sits in seat without difficulty					
10. Demonstrates a good memory					
11. Follows and understands class discussions					
12. Adapts to new situations and locations appropriately					
13. Shows good judgment in social situations					
14. Cooperates without adult encouragement					
15. Is sought out by peers					
16. Does acceptable classwork in comparison to others					
17. Does acceptable classwork in comparison to ability					

Comments: _____

Educational Recommendations: _____

Attach Work Sheets

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Secondary Teacher Checklist of Suspected SLD Student Characteristics

Student: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Subject/Grade: _____

	Most of the time	Some of the time	Seldom	Never	Not observed
1. Arrives for class on time					
2. Brings necessary work materials to class					
3. Initiates work after directions are given					
4. Hands assignments in on time					
5. Does assignments neatly and in a readable manner					
6. Can organize materials logically (notebooks, assignments)					
7. Can maintain a notebook					
8. Can make notes independently from a lecture					
9. Can outline or take notes from a textbook					
10. Can handle more than one direction at a time					
11. Gets along well with adults					
12. Gets along well with peers					
13. Participates in class discussion/activities					
14. Accepts responsibility					
15. Demonstrates sound judgment					
16. Demonstrates self-discipline					
17. Demonstrates a good memory					

Comments: _____

Educational Recommendations: _____

Attach Work Sheets

Teacher Academic and Adaptive Behavior Checklist

Student _____ Teacher _____ Date _____

Instructions to Teacher: Please read and consider each item carefully. You may have to do some brief, informal testing to answer certain items accurately. Place a " + " before the skills the student currently exhibits. Place a " – " before a skill the student does not exhibit. If the student has mastered part of a skill (for example: telling time), draw a line through the part of the skill still to be mastered. Example: + Tells time to the hour, half hour, ~~quarter hour~~. Leave blank the skills that are not appropriate for the student's age group.

Use the "Comments" section to clarify problem areas. Your comments are **extremely** important and provide an opportunity for you to share your impressions of this child with other evaluation team members.

1. **Oral Expression** **Comments**

_____ Can be understood when speaking
_____ Makes sense in conversation
_____ Responds verbally after a brief interval
_____ Adequate vocabulary to express ideas
_____ Grammar and sentence structure are as mature as peers
_____ Speaks in complete sentences most of the time
_____ Tells story in proper sequence
_____ Responses to questions are appropriate
_____ Rarely uses gestures to communicate
_____ Shows no difficulty remembering the right words when speaking

2. **Listening Comprehension**

_____ Adequate attention span
_____ Follows oral directions
_____ Understands what is said
_____ Remembers spoken information
_____ Understands subtleties in word or sentence meaning
_____ Shows appropriate sensitivity to noise
_____ Discriminates between words and sounds that are similar
_____ Understands without asking for repetition
_____ Is able to tune out noise distractions

3. **Written Expression**

Achievement is: ____ Average or above ____ below average ____ failing

_____ Copying drawing[illegible]e as mature as peers
_____ Can write first and la[illegible]ne
_____ Adequate letter formation
_____ Writing stays on line
_____ Adequate spacing of letters/words
_____ Legible Writing
_____ Writing is performed with reasonable ease
_____ Can copy from a paper or the chalkboard
_____ Keeps paper at normal angle when writing
_____ Makes few reversals
_____ Recognizes letter/number reversals
_____ Able to write letter when hearing letter name
_____ Able to write letter when hearing letter sound
_____ Passes spelling tests
_____ Spelling in daily work is acceptable
_____ Capitalizes correctly
_____ Punctuates correctly
_____ Writes a complete sentence
_____ Communicates adequately in longer written assignments
_____ Writes cohesive paragraph
_____ Vocabulary, grammar, syntax, or usage are adequate for age

4. **Related Behaviors**

_____ Pays attention in group instructional situations
_____ Concentrates well
_____ Is normally active
_____ Raises hand and waits turn to speak

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Teacher Academic and Adaptive Behavior Checklist (Cont.)

Comments

_____ Works independently
_____ Keeps attention on own work
_____ Performs fine motor tasks (cutting, drawing, etc) adequately
_____ Is neat and organized
_____ Has adequate tolerance for frustration
_____ Has adequate stamina for age
_____ Approaches new people easily
_____ Calms down after recess
_____ Performance is consistent

5. **Adaptive Behavior**

_____ Can state whole name
_____ Can state address
_____ Can state phone number
_____ Can state age
_____ Can state birthday
_____ Cares for personal hygiene needs independently at school
_____ Adequate personal cleanliness
_____ Dresses appropriately for weather and school events
_____ Can travel about school without adult supervision
_____ Takes responsibility for own and others' possessions
_____ Participates in play or social activities appropriate for age
_____ Relates to, or communicates with, other adults or children appropriately
_____ Behavior or appearance is within normal limits
_____ Learns from the same experiences from which other children learn
_____ Handles money adequately at school
_____ Has skills to function independently

6. **Personal/Social/Emotional Functioning**

_____ Plays or socializes appropriately with children of similar age
_____ Is friendly and good natured
_____ Keeps hands and comments to self
_____ Responds to discipline
_____ Builds and maintains satisfactory interpersonal relationships with teachers and peers
_____ Displays appropriate types of behavior or feelings
_____ Is generally happy
_____ Is socially mature
_____ Has a good self concept
_____ Handles frustrations in a mature manner
_____ Is confident about accomplishments
_____ Has a stable family structure or home environment
_____ Volunteers to answer questions
_____ Shares experiences with classmates and teacher

7. **Physical Self**

_____ Seems healthy
_____ Vision in class seems normal
_____ Hearing in class seems normal
_____ Appears alert and rested
_____ Seems adequately nourished
_____ Seems adequately cared for
_____ Normal height, weight
_____ Able to march, run, hop, jump, gallop, etc.
_____ General body coordination within normal limits
_____ Performs physical education requirements adequately
_____ Has a good body image
_____ Is well coordinated
_____ Can use scissors or perform tasks requiring fine motor coordination adequately
_____ Good physical fitness (endurance, strength)

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8. **Basic Reading Skills/Reading Comprehension/Reading Readiness** **Comments**

_____ Positive attitude towards subject
_____ Participates in class discussion
_____ Completes in-class assignments
_____ Completes homework assignments
_____ Names eight (8) basic colors
_____ Recites alphabet in sequence
_____ Names letters out of sequence
_____ States consonant sounds
_____ States vowel sounds
_____ Discriminates between letter sounds
_____ Blends sounds when reading new words
_____ Does not reverse, invert letters
_____ Does not reverse words
_____ Knows initial consonant blends and digraphs
cl ch cr sh sl st fr fl ph dr gr br bl
th tr wr
_____ Knows digraph phonograms
ame ate ay urch ock im ud ool
ing ick ank out ab ine ack ace ight end tion
ture
_____ Knows short vowels
a e i o u
_____ Knows long vowels, vowel digraphs, and vowel diphongs,
a e i c u ar ay er ea ir ew oy ur ou oi
or ai aw ow oa
_____ Applies word attack skills
_____ Reads vocabulary words at grade level
_____ Understands reading vocabulary words
_____ Adequate oral reading
_____ Adequate factual comprehension when teacher reads aloud
_____ Adequate factual comprehension when reads to self
_____ Adequate inferential comprehension when reads to self
_____ Adequate written responses to reading comprehension question
_____ Reads Dolch list (underline words child can read on an attached page)

9. **Mathematical Calculation and Reasoning**

_____ Positive attitude towards subject
_____ Participates in class discussion
_____ Completes in-class assignments
_____ Completes homework assignment
_____ Counts from 1 to 10
_____ Counts objects to 10
_____ Recognizes numerals to _____ out of sequence
_____ Writes numerals sequentially to _____
_____ Reads number words to 10
_____ Demonstrates understanding of size and quantity concepts:
more than, less than, large, small, shorter, taller, etc.
_____ Identifies circle, square, triangle, rectangle, diamond
_____ Explains symbols: + − = × ÷ $ ¢ %
_____ Add single digits: sums to 10
_____ Adds single and double digits: sums to 20
_____ Adds mult-digit without carrying
_____ Adds multi-digit with carrying
_____ Demonstrates memorization of basic facts to 10
_____ Demonstrates memorization of basic facts to 20
_____ Subtracts single digits from 10

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Teacher Academic and Adaptive Behavior Checklist (Cont.)

Comments

_____ Subtracts single and double digits from 20
_____ Subtracts multi-digit numerals without borrowing
_____ Subtracts multi-digit numerals with borrowing
_____ Demonstrates memorization of basic facts from 10
_____ Demonstrates memorization of basic facts from 20
_____ Demonstrates understanding of place value
_____ Multiplies single digit numerals
_____ Demonstrates memorization of multiplication facts through 10 x 10
_____ Multiplies multi-digit numerals with carrying
_____ Divides single-digit by single-digit numerals
_____ Demonstrates memorization of division facts through 100 ÷ 10
_____ Divides multi-digit by single-digit without remainder
_____ Divides multi-digit by single-digit with remainder
_____ Divides multi-digit by multi-digit with remainder
_____ Computes single-step word problems
_____ Computes multi-step word problems
_____ Names fractional parts when shown pictorial representation
_____ Matches fraction to pictorial representation
_____ Reads fractions (1/2, 2/3, 5/7, etc.) and mixed numbers
_____ Computes percentages of numbers
_____ Uses decimals in basic operations
_____ Demonstrates understanding of decimal-fraction-percent equivalents
_____ Tells time to the hour, half hour, quarter hour, five-minute interval, minute
_____ Identifies seasons and states attributes
_____ States days of the week in order
_____ States months of the year in order
_____ States day, month, date, year from calendar
_____ Identifies coins and bills
_____ Makes change to $1.00, $5.00
_____ Measures to the inch, half inch, quarter inch, eighth inch
_____ Identifies linear equivalents (number feet in yard, etc.)
_____ Identifies liquid equivalents (number cups in quart, etc.)
_____ Figures square footage, perimeter, volume

Special Education Observation Form

Student: _____ Teacher: _____ School: _____ Date: _____

	Yes	At Times	No	Not Applicable
Oral Expression				
1. Responds appropriately to questions				
2. Volunteers to answer questions				
3. Able to speak in complete sentences				
4. Makes sense when communicating orally				
Listening Comprehension				
1. Follows directions				
2. Remembers spoken information				
3. Understands subtleties in language or word meaning				
Written Expression				
1. Acceptable handwriting (if child reverses letters, indicate here)				
2. Acceptable spelling in daily work				
3. Punctuates and capitalizes at grade expectancy				
4. Writes complete sentences				
5. Written work makes sense				
6. Grammar, syntax, and usage at grade expectancy				
Basic Reading Skill				
1. Remembers letter sounds				
2. Discriminates between sounds				
3. Applies word attack skills				
4. Applies structural analysis skills (prefixes, suffixes, syllables, etc.)				
5. Reads sight vocabulary at grade level				
Reading Comprehension				
1. Adequate literal comprehension				
2. Adequate inferential comprehension				
Mathematical Calculation				
1. Computes math problems correctly using basic operations				
2. Remembers math facts				

	Yes	At Times	No	Not Applicable
Mathematical Reasoning				
1. Solves story problems				
2. Applies math skills to real life situations				
Related Behaviors				
1. Pays attention to individual or group discussions				
2. Concentrates well				
3. Is normally active (neither hyper- nor hypo-active)				
4. Is normally outgoing (is neither shy nor withdrawn)				
5. Relates in a friendly manner (is neither hostile nor aggressive)				
6. Raises hand; waits turn to speak				
7. Works independently				
8. Does not bother other children				
9. Seems well coordinated				
Physical Self				
1. Color is normal (neither pale nor flushed)				
2. Seems healthy				
3. Vision in class seems normal				
4. Hearing in class seems normal				
5. Is alert and rested				
6. Seems adequately nourished				
7. Seems adequately cared for				
8. Normal height, weight				
9. General body coordination within normal limits				
10. Participates in and can satisfactorily perform physical education requirements				

Other Comments or Concerns

Developmental Guidelines

The charts below provide information about level of normal development in young children. Linguistic research indicates that the development of language and acquisition of specific linguistic skills are commensurate with age. Thus, the use of developmental expectations can provide realistic supportive data when use of standardized instruments fails to isolate the level of a child's difficulty.

Normal Development Chart

Approximate Age	Motor-Physical	Personal-Social	Adaptive-Fine Motor	Language
2-3 years	Jumps in place. Rides tricycle. Broad jumps. Throws ball overhand. Goes up and down stairs well.	Fantasy play. Temper tantrums. Imitates adult activities. Likes to please others. Ritualistic. Sense of humor. Enjoys parallel play.	Imitates circular scribbles.	Comprehends simple directions. Begins to use pronouns. Adds to pronouns, adjectives, nouns. Combines in short sentences.
3-4 years	Stands on one leg. Hops on one foot. Jumps up and down. Runs and turns well.	Highly imaginative. Affectionate towards parents. Pleasure in genital manipulation. Romantic attachment to parent of opposite sex. Jealousy of same sex parent. Parallel play. Some cooperative play.	Draws a circle and cross.	Compound and complex sentences, plurals, tenses and moods. Asks questions. Uses words as tools. Gives full name and sex when asked.
4-5 years	Mature motor control. Skips, broad jumps. Does stunts. Climbs.	Boastful, dynamic and bossy. More realistic judgment begins. Feels independent and often assertive. Some difficulty in separating fact from fantasy. Name calling added to temper tantrums.	Copies a square and a triangle. Can cut on a line. Holds objects without dropping.	Endless questions. Silly words. Loves an audience and talks to self if none available. Basic grammar developing.
5 years	Agile, poised and control motor ability. Dresses without adult assistance.	Strong sense of personal identity. Basic emotions all established. Curiosity high. Separates truth from fantasy.	Beginning to draw more complex picture.	Basic grammar still being mastered. Continued development of vocabulary.

Speech and Language Development Chart

Age	Comprehension of Verbal and Expressive Stimuli	Speech Acquisition	Responses or Sounds Produced	Language Development	Language Usage
24-30 mos.	Does not understand many specific words, but has general understanding of whole linguistic unit (sentences). Responds actively to verbal requests. Listens to stories. Distinguishes "in," "under." Confuses time.	Uses 200 to 300 words. Developing adverbs and adjectives. Differentiates between "mine," "me," "you," "I."	Produces all vowels, and /p/, /b/, /m/, /t/, /d/, /n/. Final and medial consonants are usually not present.	Uses 1 to 3 word sentence. Some confusion of verb forms: "doed," or "goded" for "want." Telescopes phrases. Jargon drops out. Plurals, past tense developing.	Egocentric speech prevails. Socialized speech beginning to develop. Extension of meanings develop. Asks simple questions. Expresses emotions which are accompanied by bodily motion. Names, describes objects. Narrates simple experiences.
30-36 mos.	Rapidly developing comprehension of sentence structure, syllable sequence and melody. Understands some opposite concepts (yes-no, come-go, run-stop). Comprehends time words. Identifies action in pictures. Listens to longer stories. Enjoys rhythmical repetitions of others. Beginning to understand semantic differences in subject, object.	Uses 300-800 words.	Pronunciation unstable. Telescopes words. Uses /ng/, /g/, /h/, /w/. Often omits middle consonant sounds. Has established firm base of pitch but uses wide variability.	Uses 3 word sentences. Uses "this," "that," 2-3 prepositions. Relays telescoped message to others. Repeats heard phrases. Names pictures. Shifts between "me" and "I."	Continues egocentric speech. Talks to self about self. Gives full name. Recites 1-2 nursery rhymes. Asks questions. Improvises sentence structure: "Look me no," for "Don't look at me." Anwers simple questions.

Speech and Language Development Chart (Cont.)

Age	Comprehension of Verbal and Expressive Stimuli	Speech Acquisition	Responses or Sounds Produced	Language Development	Language Usage
3-4 years	Distinguishes separate words in a phrase or sentence. Still imperfect understanding of words. Does not remember unstressed words.	Uses 900 to 1,500 words. Developing verbs, pronouns, adverbs.	Uses /y/, /k/, /g/, /r/, /v/. Sound substitutions, omissions, distortions still occur. Speech fairly intelligible. Rhythm sometimes dysfluent. Often uses loud voice.	Uses 4 or 5 word sentences. Is developing rules of language. Uses subject-predicate sentences. Misuses many words. Experiments with sentence form.	Egocentric speech prevails. Pleasurable experimentation with words. Perception, inner language developing. Communicative speech developing. "Why" stage. Relates experiences. Asks questions. Says nursery rhymes. Names primary colors.
4-5 years	Understands most of what is said to him/her. Beginning to under stand isolated word meanings. Understands sound differences in words. Perceives differences in concrete events. Uses extension of meaning in interpreting speech of others. Links past and present events.	Uses 1,900 to 2,200 words.	Uses /s/, /sh/, /ch/, /j/, /l/. Sometimes reverses sound order in words. 98% of speech intelligible. Vocal pitch controlled. Imitates parent's rhythm and intonation. Rhythm improving. Some adult rhythm.	Uses 6-8 word sentences. Complex and compound sentences. Elaborates descriptions. Spontaneous corrections in grammar. Vocabularly reflects linguistic culture - uses colloquial expressions. Defines simple words. Experiments with words.	More social communication. Egocentric speech declining. Asks "how" and "why." Little cooperative thinking with others, but engages in collective monologues. Tells tales. Counts 3 objects.
5-6 years	Understands percepts of number, speed, time, space. Shows inner logic in recounting plots of children's plays on TV. Advances in categorization. Increase in comprehension. Understands meaning of isolated words.	Uses mean vocabulary of 2,072-2,289 words.	/f/, /v/, /l/, /s/, not yet stablilized but articulation 89% to 100% intelligible.	Many spontaneous corrections in grammar. Sentence structure becoming accurate and complex. Uses all basic sentence structure. Defines simple words. Language becoming symbolic.	Responsive discourse. Gives and receives information. Abstraction beginning but still meager. Mainly realistic, but developing imaginative thinking. Primitive argument and abstraction developing. Conversation is socialized.
6-7 years	Comprehends 4,000 words. Comprehends word structure. Anticipates closure in speech of others. Perception and inner language develop. Understands time intervals, seasons of year, left, right.	Uses mean vocabulary of 2,562 words.	Proficiency established in /l/, /t/, /th/, /t/, /j/. More varied patterns of facial expression in speech.	Has command of every form of sentence structure.	Asks for explanations, motives of action, etc. Attempts to verbalize casual relationship.
7-9 years	Understands casual or logical relations. Understands 6,000-8,000 words.	Uses mean vocabulary of 2,562-2,818 compared with an adult vocabulary of around 10,000 words.	Sound proficiency established. All sounds developed. Facial and hand gestures emphasize speech rhythm.	Grammatical errors are chiefly related to cultural environment.	Egocentric speech has gone underground. Inner language developed markedly. True communication - sharing of ideas.

The normal development and speech and language development charts are based on information in the following references: Berry & Eisenson, 1956; Gessel & Amatruda, 1937; Ruttenberg & Wolf, 1967 (both articles); and Schell, Stark & Giddon, 1967.

Classroom Observation Procedure and Protocol (COPP)
Directions for Use

Introduction

The Classroom Observation Procedure and Protocol technique is designed to record the behaviors of a target pupil, control pupil, and classroom teacher. In addition to these behaviors, the protocol provides for recording the type of activity in which the observed pupil is engaged.

The data collected with the protocol will show the amount of appropriate and inappropriate behavior of target and control pupils and will indicate the amount and type of teacher behavior which is directed at the target and control pupils. One primary purpose of the technique is to provide data which can be used by the multidisciplinary team in determining the target pupil's eligibility for special education.

Definition of Behaviors

Three general categories of pupil behaviors and four categories of teacher behaviors are described below. These categories are deliberately defined broadly in order to include a full range of pupil and teacher behaviors. There will be occasions, however, where a need exists to focus data collection on more specific pupil or teacher behaviors. Space is provided on the protocol for recording two additional behaviors for the pupil and one more for the teacher. During the interview with the pupil's teacher, such specific behaviors should be identified, labeled, and defined with the observer so that they may be added to the protocol as indicated below.

Pupil Behaviors

Pupil behaviors will be indicated on the protocol by the observer making certain marks in the appropriate column that is labeled for that category of behavior. There can be up to five categories of behaviors recorded. The three general categories are defined as:

Appropriate Behavior: All pupil behaviors which are situationally appropriate are included in this category. Examples: looking at teacher when speaking, answering teacher's questions, reading silently, raising hand and waiting to be called on, writing answers to workbook questions, etc. (The observer should identify, in the pre-observation interview with the teacher, the classroom "rules" which govern pupil behavior during the obervation period.)

Inappropriate Disruptive Behavior: This category includes all pupil behaviors which disrupt the ongoing appropriate activity of other pupils but do not fit one of the specific behaviors identified to be added to the protocol (see below). Examples: out-of-seat, talking, screaming, shouting, jumping, throwing books or other objects, hitting other pupils, making faces, laughing, foot tapping, rattling papers, moving chair or desk, tearing papers, etc.

Inappropriate Nondisruptive Behavior: All nondisruptive behaviors (i.e., those which do not attract peer attention) by which the pupil withdraws from participating in the appropriate activity, but which do not fit one of the specific behaviors identified to be added to the protocol, are included in this category.

The two specific pupil behaviors, if identified by the teacher for separate recording, should be labeled and defined in the space provided below or on a separate sheet.

(Specific pupil behavior label) _____ : (Definition) _____

_____

(Specific pupil behavior label) _____ : (Definition) _____

_____

Teacher Behavior

Teacher behaviors will be indicated on the protocol by the observer placing an appropriate symbol (as indicated below) in the column representing the pupil's behavior to which the teacher has responded at the moment of the observation. Four teacher behaviors are defined as:

***Positive* (+):** This is a positive approving response from the teacher to the pupil. This category would include both verbal and non-verbal behaviors. Examples: (1) verbal praise (e.g., "I'm pleased to see that you are looking at me today."); (2) physical praise (e.g., a pat on the back, a wink of the eye, a handshake, a smile, a nod, etc.).

***Negative* (−):** Following a behavior of the pupil, the teacher responds with criticism, disapproval, a threat of punishment, or punishment. Examples: negative comment, a frown, a glare, sending pupil to the office, headshaking, yelling, belittling, hitting, grabbing, scolding, raising voice, etc.

***Instructional* (It):** This category includes all behaviors of the teacher which are instructional and are neither approving nor disapproving, but are directed at the observed pupil. Examples: giving instructions, responding to pupil question, handing out papers, etc.

***Other* (O):** All teacher behaviors not covered by the above (and below) categories are included here. Examples: teacher sitting at desk scoring papers, teacher speaking to pupil other than observee, teacher giving instructions to entire class, teacher approving entire class, teacher disapproving a specific pupil other than observee, etc.

One additional specific teacher behavior, if identified by the teacher for separate recording, should be labeled and defined in the space below or on a separate sheet. This behavior will be represented on the protocol by the symbol "Ex."

(Specific teacher behavior label) _____ (Ex.) (Definition) _____

_____

Initiating the Observation

Prior to beginning the observation, the observer should meet with the pupil's teacher to accomplish the following:

1. Identify through discussion two specific classroom behaviors, if any, that are of special concern to the teacher. (These behaviors can be inserted on the protocol and recorded for both target and control pupils.)
2. Ask the teacher to review the established "rules" for the classroom.
3. Ask the teacher to identify one "control" pupil of the same sex as the target pupil who is an "average achiever" and who is usually, but not always, "well-behaved." (This control pupil will be observed during alternate minutes with the target pupil.)
4. Review with the teacher what will be done during the observation session. Show the teacher the protocol and summary form. Explain that you will be observing the target pupil, the control pupil, and the teacher's interactions with them and the class. Ask the teacher to announce to the class on the morning of the scheduled observation that you will be there to observe. (Caution the teacher not to identify the observees to the class or to the individual observees.)
5. Schedule the dates and times for at least two 30-minute observations. The observations should be scheduled during the instructional periods which the teacher suggests are the "best" times to observe the target pupil's "problem"; verify that the classroom rules described earlier are in effect during these periods.

Using the Protocol

Observer Materials

The observer should have pencil, clipboard, and watch with sweep second hand or second timer, a stopwatch or other timing device which can demarcate 15 second intervals.

Observer Rules

The observer should at all times during the observation session demonstrate the following behaviors:

1. Do not interact with the teacher or the pupils. If an attempt is made by the teacher or pupils to initiate communication, the observer should ignore the attempt or, if necessary, politely and quickly explain the reason for being in the classroom and return to observing.
2. Remain unobtrusive to the class members by remaining as far away as possible from the pupils being observed. The location of the observer should be changed only when it is necessary. Example: the observee has moved out of auditory or visual range of the observer for what is anticipated to be several minutes.

Observer Recording Rules

The observer should be careful to record all information in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Record on both protocol and summary form (a) the names of the target and control pupils, and (b) the date and time of the observation session.
2. Record on the summary form (a) the school and grade level where the observation is taking place, (b) the subject of instruction at the time of observation, and (c) the names of the teacher and the observer.
3. Note that in column 1 of the protocol, each of the numbers represents one minute of observation. Thus, it can be used for a total of 30 minutes. Each row is to be used for recording the instructional activity and symbols for teacher behavior during each respective minute.
4. Make sure that before beginning the observation session one has clearly in mind that the target pupil is to be observed during the first, third, fifth, etc., minutes and that the control pupil is to be observed during the second, fourth, sixth, etc., minutes. Remember that each minute involves four observations of the pupil and teacher behaviors at 15 second intervals. Note that column 2 of the protocol labels these minutes alternately as "T" (target pupil) and "C" (control pupil).
5. Note that the heading of column 3 is ***Activity.*** At the beginning of each minute, the observer should check the activity code designating the activity in which the class is engaged in accordance with the following four categories:

Group Instruction: The total class or subgroup, of which the observee is a member, is involved as a unit in the same activity. Examples: teacher giving arithmetic instruction at chalkboard, teacher lecturing, teacher giving instructions, "study hall," class discussion, reading group, etc.

Project Work: The class has been divided into small groups for "project work." Examples: science projects, learning centers, social studies projects, committee work, etc.

Individual Work: Observed pupil is among the majority of pupils who are each engaged in an individual activity. Asking for or receiving assistance from another pupil or from the teacher would not exclude use of this category. Examples: reading silently, completing workbook assignments, completing "dittos," use of games during "reward period" or "free time," etc.

Transitional: This category is used for those times when the class is between activities. Examples: class returning from recess, class lining up or waiting in line for lunch, teacher has indicated an instructional period is over but has not given instructions for the next activity.

6. Note that columns 4 through 8 are headed by the labels for the pupil behaviors. If one or two additional behaviors have been identified by the teacher, the appropriate label(s) should be entered at the heading of columns 7 and 8. Within each column are four subcolumns each providing space for the notations to be made during each of the 15 second intervals for that minute of observation of a single pupil. Recording in these columns is carried out in the following manner for each 15 second interval:
   a. Observe the pupil and make a mental note of the behavior.
   b. Observe the teacher and determine what category of behavior the teacher is exhibiting.
   c. Record the appropriate code for the teacher's behavior in the numbered subcolumn which corresponds to the proper 15 second interval within the column headed by the category of the observed pupil behavior.
   d. Record only one pupil and one teacher behavior in each 15 second interval.
   e. Alternate each minute between target and control pupils.

Tips for Success

When using the protocol, the observer should look at the pupil behavior at the beginning of the 15 second interval for only as long as is necessary to determine what behavior category best represents the behavior being observed. Next, the observer should view the teacher in the same manner and then record the behaviors in the appropriate space. (A symbol represents the teacher's behavior and its position in one of the columns represents the pupil's behavior.) If difficulty is encountered, it will most likely result from observing the pupil or teacher for too long before recording the behavior. Adhering closely to the observer guidelines stated earlier will also make the observation easier.

Data Summary

The summary form which is used along with the protocol allows the observer to analyze the frequency a given pupil or teacher behavior occurred and the percentage of occurrence. To obtain the number of intervals of occurrence for each pupil behavior, the observer should count the number of marks (regardless of the symbol) in each respective column (lumping the subcolumns in each column) for the alternate rows, first for the "T's" and then for the "C's." These totals are recorded in the appropriate spaces of the summary form. One can total all the marks in columns 5 through 8 to get the total inappropriate behaviors. A comparison between the frequencies of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors can be calculated. When the intervention strategies are introduced, it will be possible to look for a shift from inappropriate to appropriate behaviors.

For teacher behaviors, the observer will need to count the frequency of each behavior symbol in the pupil behavior columns. This must be done first for the symbols in the target pupil rows and then the control pupil rows. When transferred to the summary form, the totals of the teacher behaviors are readily added.

Space is also provided on the summary form to record the number of minutes spent in each of the four activities by the pupils observed. This is computed by dividing the number of minutes over which each activity occurred by the total number of minutes in the observation sessions.

Classroom Observation Procedure Protocol

Name of target child (T): _____ Teacher behaviors: + Positive

Name of control child (C): _____ _____ − Negative It Instructional

Date of observation: _____ Time: _____ O Other Ex _____

(1) Minute	(2) Child	(3) Activity	(4) Appropriate Behavior 15 30 45 60	(5) Inappropriate: Disruptive 15 30 45 60	(6) Inappropriate: Nondisruptive 15 30 45 60	(7) 15 30 45 60	(8) 15 30 45 60
1	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
2	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
3	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
4	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
5	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
6	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
7	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
8	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
9	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
10	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
11	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
12	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
13	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
14	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
15	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
16	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
17	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
18	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
19	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
20	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
21	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
22	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
23	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
24	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
25	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
26	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
27	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
28	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
29	T	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					
30	C	Group ___ Individual ___ Project ___ Transitional ___					

Classroom Observation Procedure
Summary Form

Target Child: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Control Child: _____ Grade level: _____

Teacher: _____ Subject: _____

School: _____ Observer: _____

Notes from teacher interview: _____

Summary of Observational Data

Pupil Behaviors	Target Pupil		Control Pupil	
	I	%	I	%
Inappropriate disruptive				
Inappropriate nondisruptive				
Total Inappropriate Behavior				
Appropriate Behavior				

I = Number of intervals of occurrence
% = Intervals of occurrence divided by the total number of intervals in observation session x 100

Teacher Behaviors	+		−		It		O		Ex	
	I	%	I	%	I	%	I	%	I	%
Target Pupil										
Control Pupil										
TOTAL										

\+ = Positive Teacher Behavior
− = Negative Teacher Behavior
It = Instructional Teacher Behavior
O = Other Teacher Behavior
Ex = _____ Teacher Behavior

Instructional Activity	# of minutes	% of time
Group Instruction		
Project Work		
Individual Work		
Transitional		
TOTAL		

% of time = # of minutes spent in the activity divided by total observation time x 100

Comments: _____

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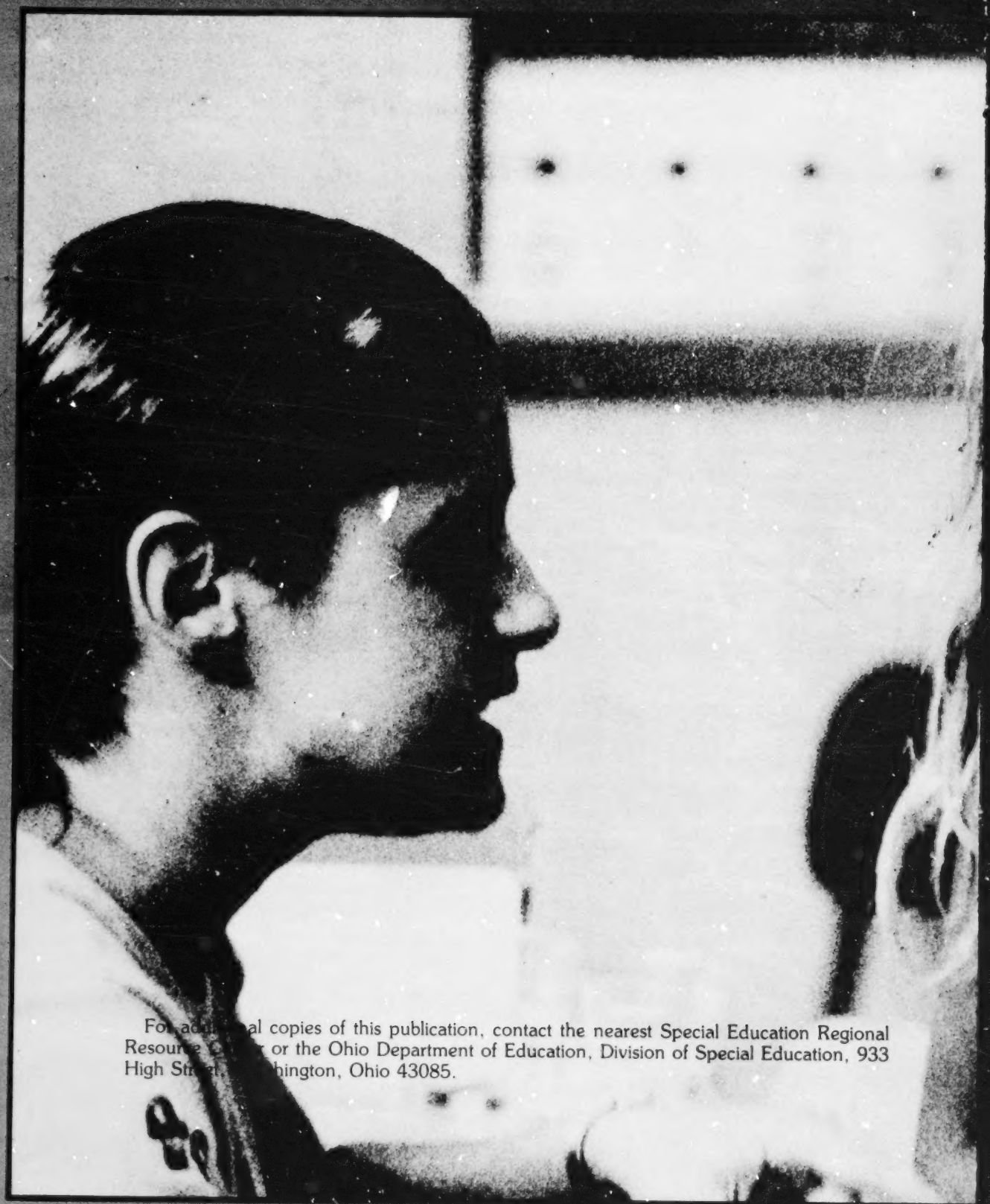

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